

Hitler's Third Reich – Issue 24

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HITLER'S Third Reich

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Editor: Chris Bishop
Deputy editor: Adam Warner
Art Director: Steve Horton
Designer: Simon Oliver
Illustrators: Peter Harper, Chris Bishop
Photography: David Tosh
Writers: Chris Bishop, Kurt Steiner, Adam Warner, William Wilson

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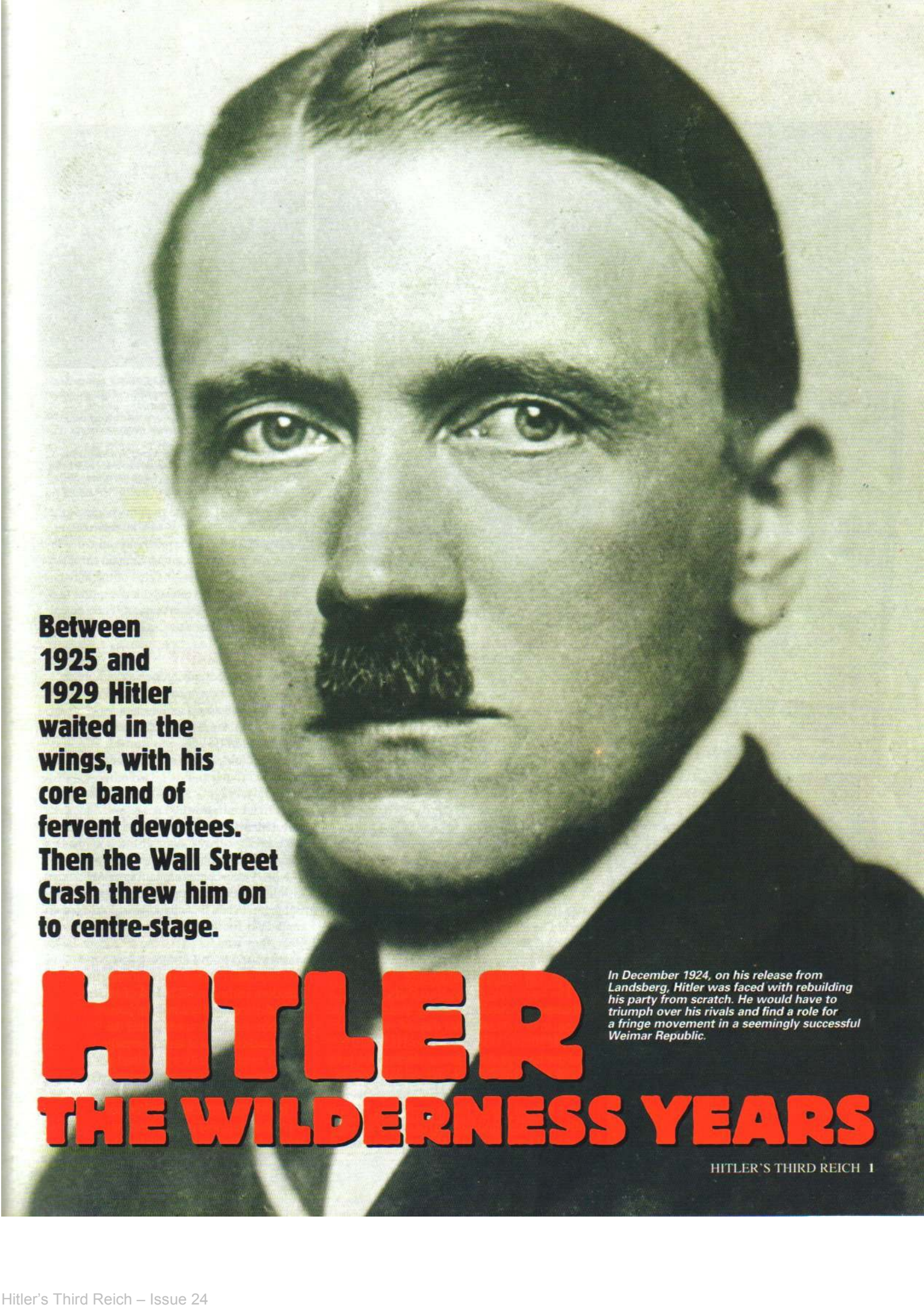
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**Between
1925 and
1929 Hitler
waited in the
wings, with his
core band of
fervent devotees.
Then the Wall Street
Crash threw him on
to centre-stage.**

HITLER

THE WILDERNESS YEARS

In December 1924, on his release from Landsberg, Hitler was faced with rebuilding his party from scratch. He would have to triumph over his rivals and find a role for a fringe movement in a seemingly successful Weimar Republic.

HITLER'S THIRD REICH 1



Left: Immediately on leaving prison, Hitler used his influence with the former Munich police President to lift the ban both on the NSDAP and its journal, the *Völkischer Beobachter*.

General State Commissioner of Bavaria, General Otto von Lossow, commander of the German forces in Bavaria and Colonel Hans von Seisser, Chief of the Bavarian State Police. Hitler asserted that these men were guilty of treason and should be in the dock alongside the defendants.

VIP PRISONER

On 1 April 1924 with the hearing in front of a sympathetic judge a remarkably light sentence was handed down. Hitler was sentenced to five years in gaol, but with the prospect of early release.

Imprisoned, Hitler, at the remarkably early age of 34, began dictating *'Mein Kampf'* the book that encapsulated his political philosophy. The first secretary for the project was Hitler's personal bodyguard, chauffeur and early friend, Emil Maurice. Maurice was not popular with the Nazi hierarchy because he was dark, of French descent and some said had Jewish blood. When Rudolf Hess took over he provided Hitler with additional material to give the book greater intellectual credibility. Hitler had realised that he needed to make a move away from his roots as a street politician, and writing and publishing a book was an important gesture.

The leadership of the Nazi Party was entrusted to Alfred Rosenberg. Rosenberg, the Estonian born Nazi racial theorist, who had been at Hitler's side in the Beer-Hall Putsch had not been gaoled. He was, however, a poor leader and administrator and the party began to break up. It was said of Rosenberg that he was a man in whose hands everything became difficult and complicated. This character flaw may well have attracted, Hitler who did not



Above: On 27 February 1925, Hitler made his re-entry upon the Munich political stage where he had left it 16 months earlier – at the Bürgerbräukeller. 3,000 were admitted and a further 2,000 turned away disappointed.

Above left: The thuggish, rabid anti-semite Julius Streicher in full flow after the reforming of the NSDAP. A bulldog in appearance, Hitler could always count on his hound-like loyalty.

want to have a potential rival in charge of the party while he was in prison. Herman Göring, the World War I fighter ace, was only wounded in the Putsch and escaped to Sweden. He would not be part of the Party until 1927 when he returned looking for comradeship and action and not "ideological junk."

'GOING STRAIGHT'

In fairness to Rosenberg, he worked under considerable constraints; the Nazi Party and SA had been banned and so a cover organisation, the *Grossdeutschland Volks Gemeinschaft* (GVG), was formed. Disguised as sports clubs, choirs or rifle clubs, the SA continued to meet.

In May 1924, Gregor Strasser, Rosenberg and Erich Ludendorff were acquitted for their part in the Beer Hall Putsch. Forming the *Völkisch Bloc* they took over the GVG and formed the National Socialist Freedom Party. The party was beginning to fragment however, as Julius Streicher formed his own group in Bamberg. When this covert Nazi Party put up candidates for the Reichstag elections of May 1924, they won 32 out of the 472 seats. Hitler was released from Landsberg early on 20 December 1924, and that month the NS Freedom Party lost all but 14 of its seats.

Hitler's immediate task on leaving prison was to re-establish control over the Party. It was a difficult and long campaign but Hitler was to emerge totally triumphant with the allegiance of a large and growing band of fanatic followers.

In February 1925 the NS Freedom party was dissolved, and, using the first issue of the *Völkischer Beobachter* to be published since



AFTER THE DISASTROUS failure of the Beer Hall Putsch on 8–9 November 1923 it seemed, to anyone who was interested, that Adolf Hitler was a spent force in German politics. The Nazi Party over which he had quickly exerted control had been banned by the authorities. Hitler and the other leaders of the coup attempt were now to be placed on trial for their lives.

The trial of the leaders of the Putsch for high treason began on 24 February 1924. It attracted world-wide attention and over 100 reporters attended. Most of the interest was due to the presence of the distinguished German military leader General Erich von Ludendorff who was a defendant. Initially there was not as much interest in Hitler.

But all this changed. The trial gave Hitler his first audience outside Bavaria and he was not going to waste the opportunity. Those present included Gustav Ritter von Kahr the



1923 Hitler announced a 'new' Nazi Party at a meeting at the Bürgerbräukeller. There was a good crowd, however Ernst Röhm and Strasser did not attend and Anton Drexler refused to chair the meeting. His place was taken by the reliable Max Amann.

BATTLE BEGINS AGAIN

During the meeting Hitler reclaimed his position as absolute leader of the Nazi Party and patched up some of the ongoing feuds. But during his two hour speech before 4,000 cheering Nazis, Hitler got carried away and started with the same old threats against the democratic republic, Marxists and Jews.

For this, the government of Bavaria slapped him with a two year ban on public speaking. It was a major setback for Hitler, who owed much of his success to his speech-making ability. But rather than be discouraged or slowed down, Hitler immediately began reorganizing the Nazi Party with feverish energy.

Hitler determined to organize the Nazi Party like a government, so that when power was achieved and democracy was legitimately ended, this 'government-in-waiting' could slip right into place.

The party in Germany was therefore divided into 34 *Gau*, with seven more in areas considered German, such as Austria and Danzig.

In March 1925, Gregor Strasser agreed to take on the leadership of the Nazis in north Germany. Strasser had served with distinction as an officer in World War I and had been awarded the Iron Cross First and Second Class. With his brother Otto he was an early member of the Nazi Party and contributed to its expansion. The Strassers represented the Socialist wing of the Party, and as such became increasingly estranged from the mainstream organisation. They saw Hitler's circle of friends from Munich as corrupt, and were concerned that Hitler had sided with big business and the remnants of the Hohenzollern aristocracy.

PARTY DEFECTIONS

In March and April 1925 Röhm and Drexler resigned from the Party and Drexler attempted unsuccessfully to form a new one. By July, Party membership in Munich had fallen to 700. Yet, in the north, assisted by Joseph Goebbels, Strasser was increasing membership.

In November at a meeting in Hanover convened by Strasser, Goebbels and Rust, Hitler's delegate from the south, Gottfried Feder, was ordered out. In December the north-south divide took a further lurch when

Landsberg 1924 Imprisoned 'Genius'



HITLER WAS INTERNED in the old fortress of Landsberg am Lech. Built in 1009 in the style of a medieval castle, this gaol was deemed to be a place of 'honourable' detention, suitable, for example, for a duellist committed for homicide. In prison Hitler enjoyed a hotel-style existence. He wore his own clothes, was provided with his own rooms and diet, and allowed free association with the 40 Nazis who had been imprisoned with him. He had as many visitors as he wanted.

During 1924 the *volkisch* movement in Germany stalled and then fell apart. Hitler was convinced of his indispensability to the political far-right. But his inability to direct events and the enforced idleness led Hitler to write *Mein Kampf*. In this work he crystallised his 'world view', which was thereafter to remain unalterable. This philosophy boiled down to a belief that history was the story of racial struggle, in which the highest racial entity – the Aryan – was being undermined by the lowest, the parasitic Jew. It was Hitler's aim to champion the innate superiority of the Aryan.

Writing the book reinforced Hitler's boundless, narcissistic self-belief. Before the Putsch, Hitler saw his role as that of 'drummer boy' to the esteemed Ludendorff. By the time he was released he was convinced that he was Germany's messiah.

Top: Hitler spent much of his time voraciously reading. But he used this acquired knowledge only to confirm his own bigotry rather than to broaden his world view.

Right: Hitler takes a walk in the prison gardens with his general dogsbody, Emile Maurice.

Above: Hitler pictured shortly after his release from Landsberg. Whilst in prison the sycophancy of gaolers and friends alike helped convince him of his infallibility.





Above: A fervent supporter of Hitler accused him of possessing a "contempt for mankind". But he was a consummate actor, being by turn vindictive, furious, amusing or charming. He employed any number of guises to win over those who could help him.

Left: Hitler's light raincoat, woollen socks, leather leggings and riding crop lent him the appearance of an eccentric gangster, especially when he arrived in his six-seater Mercedes, with attendant henchmen.



Right: Spared a prison term for his part in the Putsch, Gregor Strasser master-minded the creation of a replacement party to the NSDAP.

Strasser published a new party programme replacing Hitler's 'Twenty Five Points.'

BURYING THE HATCHET

1926 was a critical year for Hitler. At a meeting in Bamberg in February, he outmanoeuvred and outvoted Strasser and his

programme, and won over the dynamic Goebbels. In May he was confirmed as head of the Munich wing of the Party and the "Twenty Five Points" were declared immutable. The disciplinary organisation *Untersuchungs-und Schlichtungs-Ausschüsse* USCHLA – the Committee for Investigation and Settlement was formed to ensure party loyalty and consistency.

In July 1926, the first rally of the reformed Party was held in Weimar. 5,000 uniformed men who had been drilled by Pfeffer von Salomon used the new 'Heil Hitler' salute. Pfeffer von Salomon, a tough Prussian, was not part of the sentimental Bavarian group within the Nazi party, and referred to Hitler as "that flabby Austrian." Party membership had increased to 27,000 and, importantly, a Nazi youth organisation had been established.

Goebbels was appointed *Gauleiter* in Berlin. The capital city enjoyed a reputation of being 'Red' and this post was a challenge. However the Nazi party was on a roll, and by the end of the year membership in Germany had reached 49,000.

In May 1927, Hitler was permitted to speak publicly in Bavaria and Saxony. Two months later the Party rally was held for the first time at Nuremberg, and the organisers claimed that 30,000 uniformed SA men were present. Party membership now stood at 70,000. In Berlin, Goebbels organised fund-raising rallies for the Party. His speeches were markedly anti-Semitic and prophesied the end of the

bourgeois state.

In September, Hitler was permitted to speak in Prussia and two months later Goebbels took over the propaganda branch from Strasser.

A German Secret Service report of 1927 described the Nazi Party as "a numerically insignificant... radical revolutionary group incapable of exerting any influence on the great mass of the population and the course of political events." Weimar Germany was enjoying an economic renaissance. This fertile ground was essential for germinating the seed of democracy.

BLACK FRIDAY

The 1928 elections confirmed the popularity of the Republic. The NSDAP gained a paltry 2.6 % of the popular vote. The Germans did not want Hitler.

By 1929 however, Party membership had reached 200,000 and in August at the Nuremberg Rally, 60,000 SA men were on parade.

25 October 1929 will always be remembered as Black Friday. The four year industrial boom in America ended with a stock market crash. This crisis triggered a world-wide depression affecting both industrial and agrarian economies. This was the moment for which Hitler had been born. As the export dependent German economy quickly spun out of control the Nazis were ready with a message of salvation.



NAZI Manifesto

THE 'TWENTY-FIVE POINTS' of the NSDAP were drawn up by Adolf Hitler and his political mentor Anton Drexler. They were published on 24 February 1920. In 1925 Gregor Strasser and then confederate Joseph Goebbels had attempted to substantially revise the manifesto. On 22 May 1926 Hitler succeeded in having the programme, and his ascendancy, reaffirmed. An amendment was also made to the Party statutes to show that the 'Points' were "immutable."

1. We demand the uniting together of all Germans, on the basis of the people's right of self-determination, in a greater Germany.

2. We demand... the annulment of the Peace treaties drawn up in Versailles and St. Germain.

3. We demand land and territory to provide food for our nations and settlement areas for our population surplus.

4. Only a fellow German can have right of citizenship... no Jew can be considered to be a fellow German...

7. We demand that the first priority of the state should be to ensure that its citizens have a job and a decent life. If it should prove impossible to feed the whole population of the state, foreign nationals (with no right of citizenship) should be repatriated.

8. Any further immigration of non-Germans must be prevented. We demand that all non-Germans who have entered the Reich since 2 August 1914 be forced to leave immediately.

11. (We demand) abolition of income for unemployed people or for those making no effort.

13. We demand the nationalisation of all publicly-owned companies.

16. We demand the establishment and maintenance of a healthy middle class. The large department stores should be immediately placed under the control of the local authority and should be rented out to small businesses at low prices.

18. We demand an all-out battle against those who damage the common interest by their actions... criminals against the nation, profiteers, racketeers etc. should be punished by death, without regard for religion or race...

21. The state must ensure the general good health of its citizens, by providing for mothers and children, by banning child labour, by ensuring the development of physical fitness, by making it a legal obligation to participate in sport or gymnastics and by providing all possible support for associations involved in instructing the youth in physical fitness...

23. We demand a legal battle against open political slander and its publication in the press. In order to make possible the establishment of a German press, we demand that:

a) Newspaper editors and employees whose work appears in German must have German citizenship rights.

b) Non-German newspapers must have the express permission of the state before they can appear in Germany. They must not be printed in German.

c) Newspapers which are deemed to be against the common good should be banned. We demand a legal battle against any art and literature which exerts a harmful influence on public life, and we demand that all institutions which contravene the aforementioned standards be closed down.

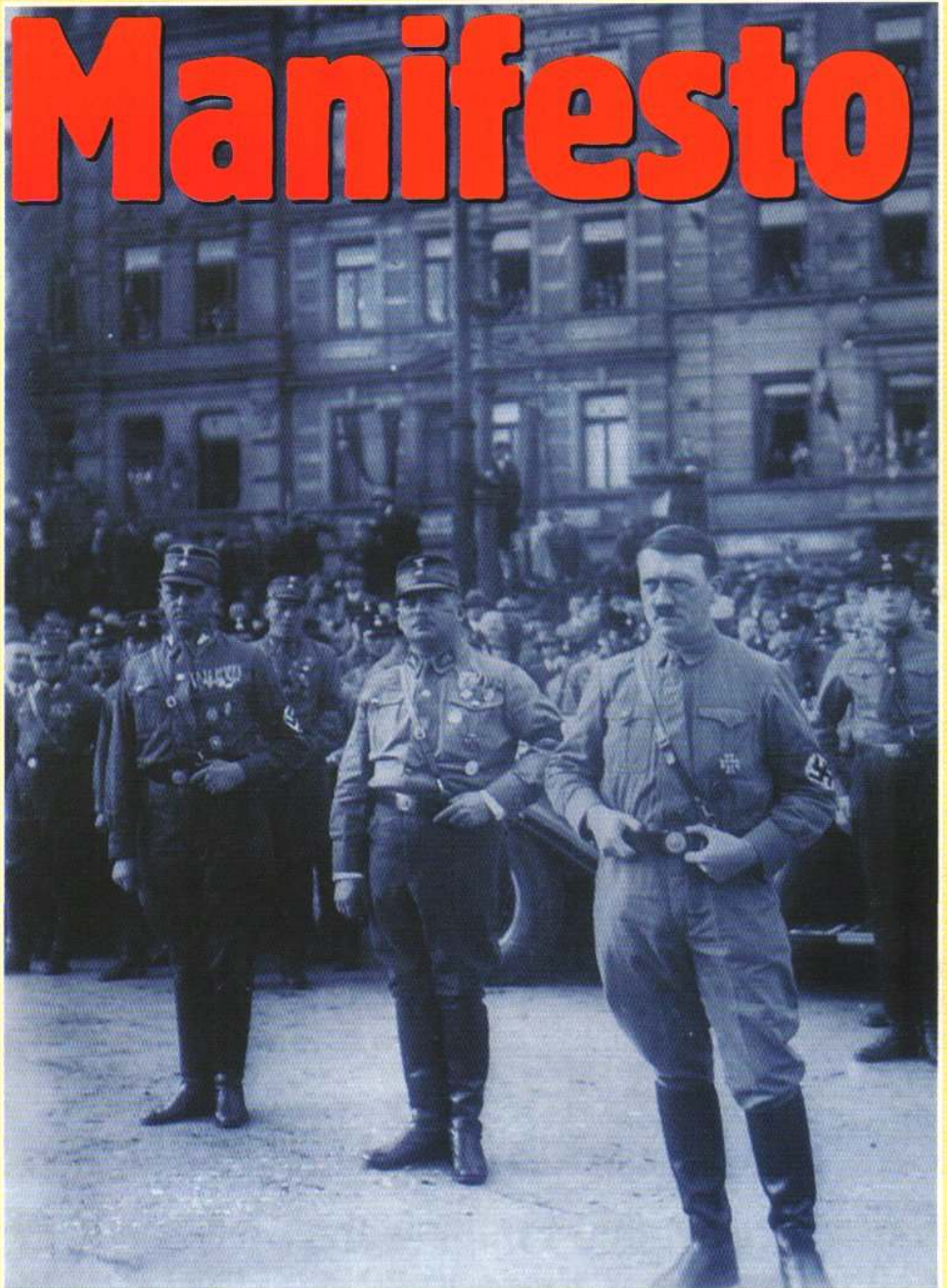
24. We demand freedom for all religious denominations in the Reich in so far as they do not endanger the position of the state or adversely affect the moral standards of the German race. As such the Party represents a

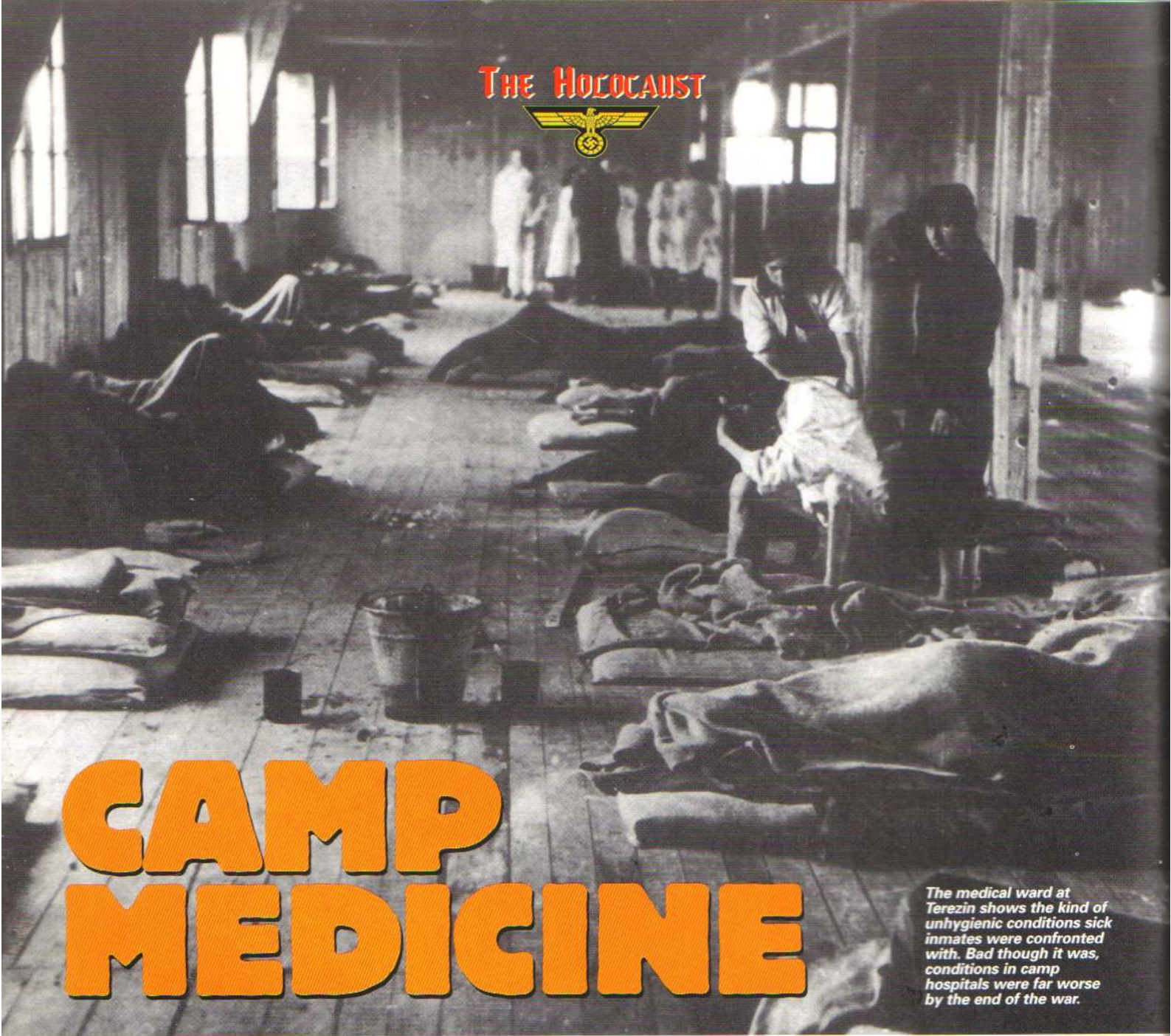
Above: For Hitler, the supreme egocentric, the Party Manifesto counted for nothing. He was not interested in principle or improving the common lot and was suspicious of the avowed socialism of henchmen like Ernst Röhm.

positively Christian position without binding itself to one particular faith. The Party opposes the materialistic Jewish spirit within and beyond us and is convinced that a lasting recovery of our people can only be achieved on the basis of the common good over individual good.

25. In order to achieve all of the foregoing we demand the setting up of a strong central administration for the Reich...

The leaders of the party promise to commit themselves fully to the achievement of the above aims, and to sacrifice their lives if need be.





CAMP MEDICINE

The medical ward at Terezin shows the kind of unhygienic conditions sick inmates were confronted with. Bad though it was, conditions in camp hospitals were far worse by the end of the war.

Nazi concentration camps were hell on earth for those unlucky souls who ended up there. Filth, overcrowding and starvation meant that disease was rife – but the SS medical staff did little to alleviate the suffering. Indeed, the Nazi doctors were among the most lethal of all who played a part in the Final Solution.

6 HITLER'S THIRD REICH

B EING SENT TO A concentration camp meant a lot of things. It meant hard physical work with very little food – even less if you were a Jew. It meant brutal treatment from the SS guards and the Kapos, or inmate foremen – brutality that was multiplied into never-ending torment for the Jews. It meant living in filth to which most Germans would not have subjected pigs. And it meant almost certain sickness and injury – in a place where illness was a death sentence.

In theory, the camps had medical facilities for the inmates,

but as one former Buchenwald prisoner told US Army investigators after the war, “The infirmary was nothing to do with curing illness. It was simply the building to which the dying were sent to die.”

CROWDED WARDS

Octave Rabaté had been deported from France in 1943, and was assigned to work with the sick. “We were herded together under dreadful conditions. The ward I worked in for the last six months of the war had 44 beds, but we often had 150 or more patients. Most had tumours, running sores or diarrhoea. One person had a



Malnutrition was a major factor in the high death rates in camp hospitals. Inmates were just too weak to fight off disease. This Nordhausen victim survived to be liberated – but it was too late.

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tumour on his leg, which had been repeatedly kicked by the guards. Eventually it became gangrenous, and with nothing to treat it he died.”

“Most suffered from diarrhoea, but the shortage of medical supplies made it impossible to care for them – it was impossible to even keep them clean. All you could do was help them to the latrine, and hose them down with water.”

“But then they were soaking wet, and there was no way of drying them. You could use the blankets, but since there were none to spare you would have to put them back on the bed soaking

wet. In their weakened state and in the winter cold that was as good as a death sentence.

“It turned out that the patients were even more abused in the wards than they were anywhere else in the camp. The SS doctors did not bother themselves about what happened when they were not there; they simply let things run their course.”

Student Olivier Richet kept notes of what he saw at Mauthausen, which at the end of 1944 was used to house inmates from other camps evacuated ahead of the advancing Russians. Its prisoner population had risen to 30,000.

“During March and April there were many cases of typhus. I don’t know exactly how many died because at first the dead were hidden until nightfall and then were buried in the woods behind the camp. Typhus, which was spread by lice, was only part of the story, however. People also died of pneumonia, scarlet fever, and tuberculosis.”

DISEASE RAMPANT

“Very often the disease would run its course quickly, and patients died within three to four weeks. Not counting those who died from dysentery, about 40 percent of those who died had

tuberculosis. Lung diseases in general were extremely common: many died from pneumonia alone, including nearly 2,000 Danes in two months. I treated 41 cases myself, while three out of every four who also contracted pleurisy died.”

“There were two epidemics of dysentery, and while the first was mild, the second was very severe, with over 50 percent fatalities. Very often victims were also suffering diarrhoea and enteritis, which hastened the deaths of the afflicted. Of course, the general poor state of health meant that cuts and sores almost invariably became abscessed.”

THE HOLOCAUST



Above: A sick Soviet prisoner of war, shot after being unable to work. Millions starved, froze, were shot or were worked to death. After the Jews, captured Russian soldiers suffered the highest death rates among the millions of Nazi prisoners.

"In April 1945 there were about 2,400 beds occupied in the hospitals and annexes, with at least that many again patients in dire need of treatment or even surgery. I estimate that 10,000 beds would not have been enough. Many of the acutely ill were simply not hospitalised. Over 2,000 died in January, over 5,000 in February and nearly 6,000 in March."

CURSORY INSPECTION

The inmates knew from their first medical inspections on arrival at the camps that they could not expect much help from the Nazis if they fell ill. A Jewish professor of theology recalled:

"These examinations were purely a formality, since the SS doctors examined five prisoners a

minute. You would walk past him naked, with outstretched hands. Sitting at a table, his chin in his hands, he would look at you and say 'Good'."

"We were asked about our occupations, and when I said 'University Professor' they designated me as 'capable of work'. I also said that I had suffered from polio, but this was simply noted down on the card as 'Childhood illness'."

SELECTED TO DIE

"What happened to my companions who did not rate a 'Good' from the doctor I did not know then, though now I know that they had been selected to die in the gas chamber."

In principle, the sick in the concentration camps did not have to go to work, and if the illness was severe they could be treated in the infirmary. However, several survivors have testified to the fact that those who remained in the camp had to endure physical and mental torture from

the guards and kapos. Eventually, nobody would declare themselves sick at roll call: they simply worked until they got better or until they became too ill to walk, by which time their chances of survival were slim.

Once in the infirmary, their chances grew even worse. "Before our arrival in the compound" a former sales-clerk recalled in 1946, "Gypsies who had been suffering from scarlet fever, typhus with skin rash and dysentery had been living there. Their blankets had not been changed, disinfected or even washed. Within a month, all 400 women who had been on the transport were sick, and were beginning to die. One of the first was a woman who had given birth soon after arrival. Her infant died also."

STARVATION RATIONS

The rations for the sick were carefully allotted, but in camps like Dachau they were supplied according to pre-war figures



HOSPITALS IN THE camps set up under the Third Reich were administratively separate from the rest of the camp system. Department V, the Camp Medical Service, was controlled by the Chief Physician of the Concentration Camps who worked through the Sanitation Office of the Camp Inspectorate.

Each camp had a specially designated hospital area, where, depending on size, there might be wards for internal diseases, surgery, infectious diseases and convalescents. At Auschwitz the latter was used to judge if Jewish prisoners were fit for work: if not, they were exterminated.

Camp medical staff included SS doctors and dentists, assigned to look after the guard personnel; SS camp doctors and dentists, who administered prisoner facilities; the SS pharmacist; and SS disinfection officers.

MEDICAL ROLES

The prison doctors did very little medical work, leaving treatment to partly trained SS medics and to prisoner doctors and nurses. The senior medical inmate was known as the sick-bay or dispensary elder. He was answerable to the SS doctors.

But medicine was only part of the task of SS medical personnel. In the extermination camps it was the SS doctors who nominally decided if a prisoner lived or died – though they would often let their orderlies do the job. They were responsible for eliminating those too sick to work, and for selecting those for medical experiments.

Medicine at Auschwitz

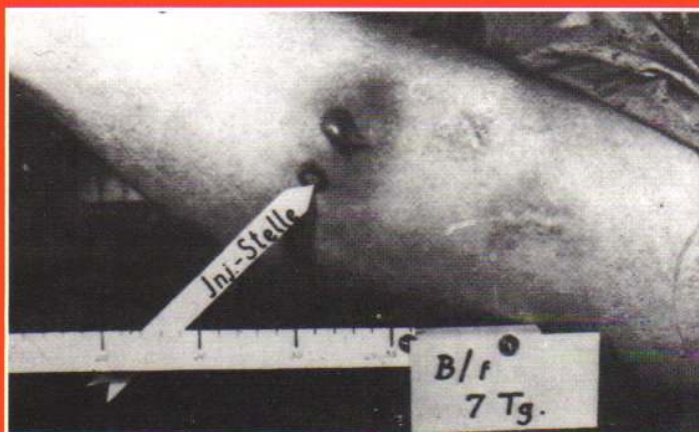


Above: Block 10 in the original camp at Auschwitz, where Doctor Carl Clauberg (top left) conducted his experiments into mass sterilisation. Jewish inmates were used as a 'dry run' for the planned extermination of the Slavs.

Right: Twins used by Doctor Joseph Mengele (top right) in his medical research – most were to die as experimental subjects. Mengele, one of the most evil of the camp doctors, escaped to South America.

Below: One of the examination rooms in Block 10, with wooden shutters placed over the windows designed to prevent inmates from seeing the executions performed in the yard outside.

Below right: A photo by Doctor Emil Kaschub of an experimental subject's arm, seven days after having been used in a test of the effects of caustic and poisonous substances.





Above: Dead prisoners left to die in the washroom at Wobbelin camp. Many concentration camp inmates survived injury and disease, only to be murdered by their captors in the days before advancing Allied forces finally liberated the camps.

estimating a sick population of around 200 at any one time. This was less than starvation rations by the end of the war, by which time more than 5,000 of the inmates were seriously ill.

In any case, there were no medications, dressings or sterilised instruments for camp inmates. Remedies were generally lacking, even if the SS medical staff had wanted to provide any. No help from outside was allowed, the Nazis refusing entry to the Red Cross.

In the extermination camps like Auschwitz, the major use for the hospitals was for killing. Samuel Steinberg, a physician

who survived deportation to Auschwitz, recorded: "Prisoners who could no longer work through illness or malnutrition were examined by the chief physician after morning roll call. They were sent in groups to Block 20."

MEDICAL MURDER

"There they were told, at the entrance to the infirmary, they would either be taken for a shower, or they would be deloused. In truth, they were taken to a special room where they were told to sit down on a chair. One medic would take the prisoners by the arms, another would cover their eyes with his hand, and a Polish Kapo would inject 4cc of phenol direct into their heart. The victims would die in a few seconds. As many as 25,000 prisoners were killed by inoculations like this.

The Living Dead

ONLY THOSE WHO ACTUALLY EXPERIENCED the reality of life in the concentration camps can really know what it was like. Still less can the ordinary person in the street understand the view of a survivor of the extermination camps. What few photographs the SS allowed to be taken can only do so much. Photographs of the camps after liberation certainly illuminate the harrowing condition of the survivors, yet they can not depict the everyday brutality, the appalling conditions, the continuing fight against back-breaking labour, disease, exhaustion and malnutrition: conditions which reduced strong men to walking skeletons and which killed so many of the old, the young and the helpless.

THE TRUE PICTURE

However, the experience was etched indelibly on the minds of those who did make it out alive, and the artists among them have been able to give the rest of us a small taste of hell. Only from drawings like these does the misery of sleeping like sardines in the disease-ridden barrack blocks become clear. The images illustrate graphically the inhumanity of being ill or injured in a place where the guard dogs were fed and clothed better than the inmates.

Below: 'Night', by Mieczyslaw Koscielniak, shows the appallingly crowded conditions in which the camp inmates lived. Getting up to go to the latrine was a major task, and in epidemic-ridden camps it became too much of an effort for the dying prisoners.



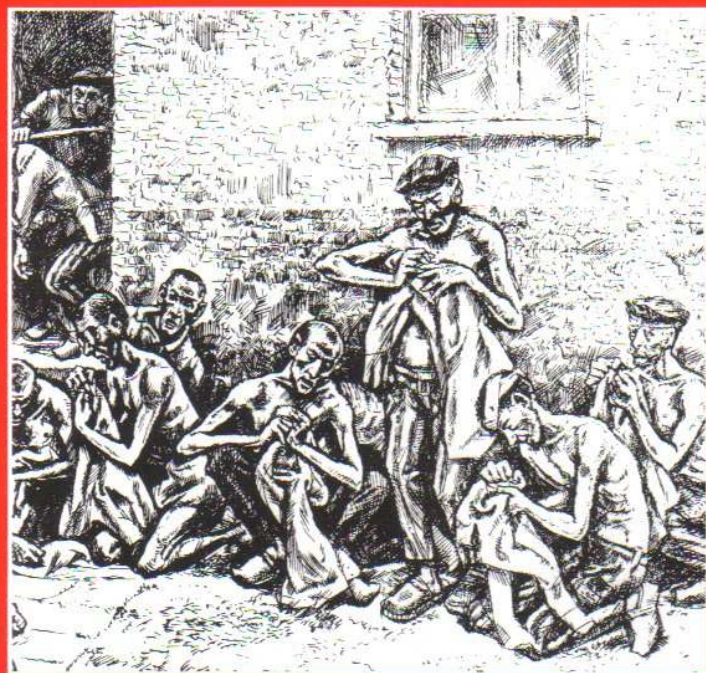


Above: Koscielniak's 'Roll Call', part of a sequence entitled 'The Prisoner's Day,' shows how the inmates were expected to appear on parade no matter what the weather, whatever the time of day.

Above right: For many inmates, life in the camps became a selfish battle of survival. But, almost incredibly, basic humanity survived, as seen in 'Looking after a sick companion.' Koscielniak survived four years in Auschwitz before being evacuated to Mauthausen in January 1945.

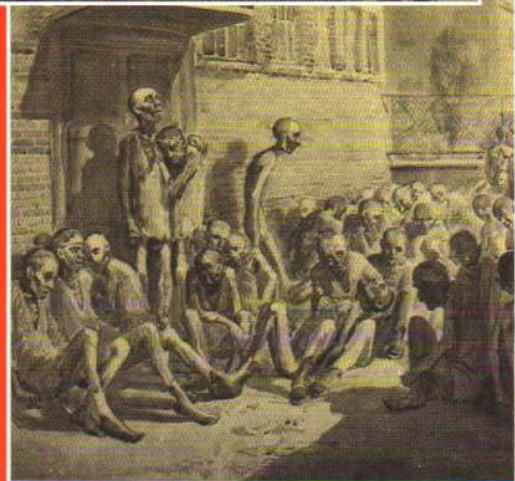


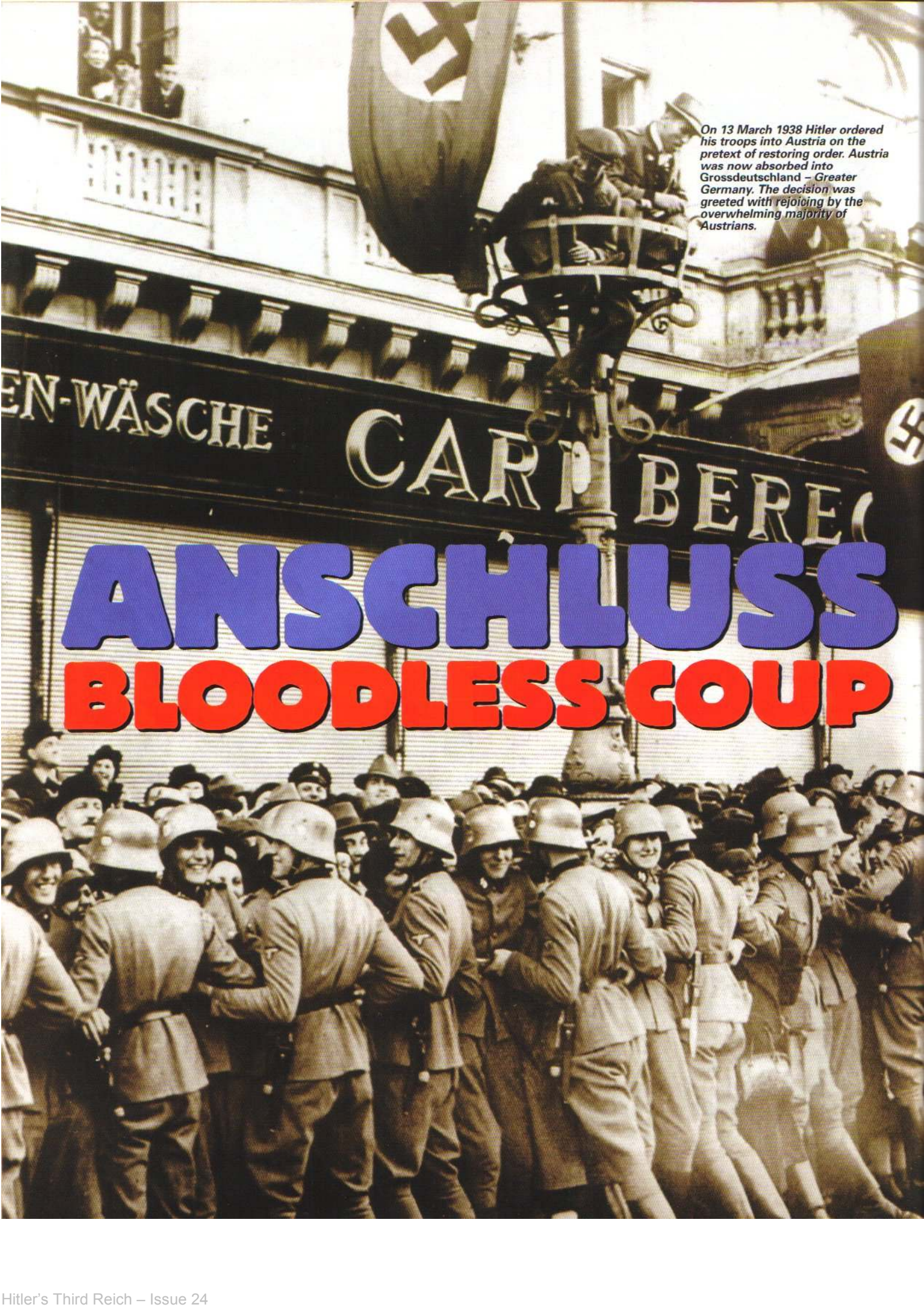
Below: A detail from 'Delousing' shows one of the few means by which the inmates could help to cut down on disease: many of the epidemics which raged through the camps were spread by lice.



Above: 'Selection of the sick for the gas chamber,' by Jerzy Potrzebowski, shows the greatest fear of all who reported sick: the prospect of immediate death.

Right: Potrzebowski's 'Prisoners at Auschwitz I waiting to be taken to the Gas Chamber' follows on from the painting above, and shows the utter lack of hope in those selected to die by the SS doctors.

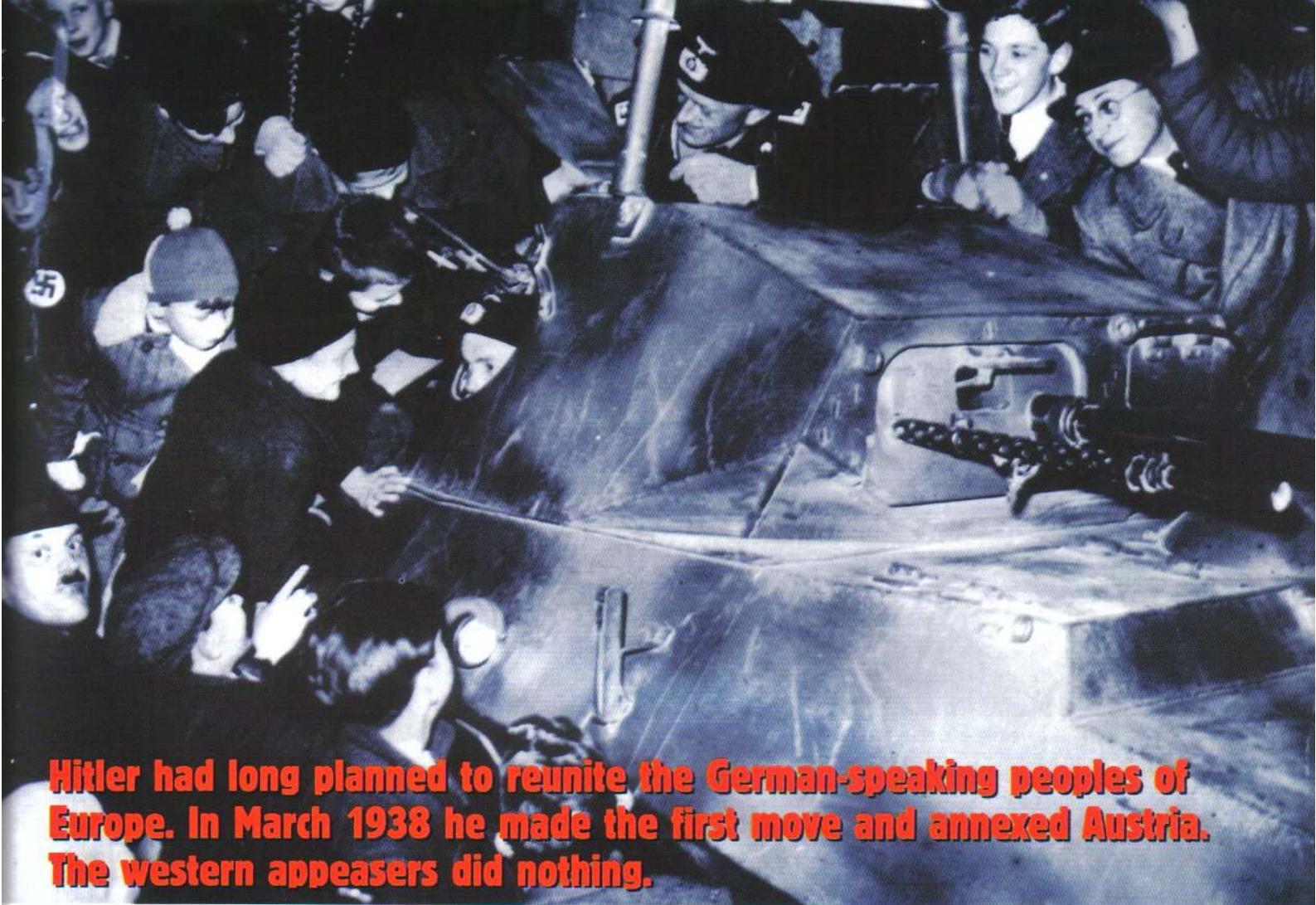




On 13 March 1938 Hitler ordered his troops into Austria on the pretext of restoring order. Austria was now absorbed into Grossdeutschland – Greater Germany. The decision was greeted with rejoicing by the overwhelming majority of Austrians.

ANSCHLUSS

BLOODLESS COUP



Hitler had long planned to reunite the German-speaking peoples of Europe. In March 1938 he made the first move and annexed Austria. The western appeasers did nothing.

ON 15 MARCH 1938 on the Heldenplatz in Vienna, Adolf Hitler announced to thunderous applause “the entry of my homeland into the German Reich.” The German Chancellor had long talked of uniting the German-speaking peoples of Europe into one nation. The unification with Austria, – The Anschluss – was the first step on this path. Austria had now ceased to exist as an independent nation and was a part of the Greater German Reich.

The idea of Anschluss went back to the wars of liberation from Napoleon (1813–1815), but for the rest of the nineteenth century was only a pipe dream of extreme nationalists. At the end of WWI however, the concept gained more widespread appeal.

NO UNION

The terms of the Versailles Treaty of 1919, drafted by the victors of WWI, attempted to recognise the

principle of a people’s self-determination. But the concept was inconsistently applied. For whilst several new European countries were created along ethnic lines, the German-speaking people was specifically forbidden from unifying. During the 1920s the Allies consistently underlined their intransigence on the issue. In 1922 Vienna had to forswear an Anschluss for 20 years in order to receive a loan from the League of Nations. Naturally this international hostility eventually drove every Austrian political party to incorporate the idea of unification with Germany into their manifestos. It was only after Hitler seized power that some parties chose to drop the demand.

Continued intervention by the Great Powers inevitably caused a polarisation within Austrian politics. In 1932 Engelbert Dollfuss came to form a Christian Socialist government. But he could count on a majority of only one vote. Dollfuss



Above: Austrians soon learned what Anschluss held in store for them. Known Socialists and Communists were stripped to the waist and flogged. Jews were forced to scrub streets and public latrines.

Top: Vienna March 1938 – Children swarm over a German armoured car as a soldier plays his part for Nazi public relations. Hitler explained his intervention in Austria by claiming that he had been ‘invited’ by the Austrian government to restore order.



Above: 12 March 1938: Austrian police guard barricades that had been hastily erected to head off any possible protests against the German invasion. They needn't have worried.

Below: A jubilant Adolf Hitler consorts with the new Austrian Chancellor Artur Seyss-Inquart. The latter had played the 'Trojan horse' convincingly within the Austrian cabinet up to the Anschluss.



of Austria was greatly increased. At the beginning of his political testament '*Mein Kampf*' Hitler had written: "German-Austria must return again to the German Motherland." From entering office in January 1933 the German Chancellor privately stood by the principle of Anschluss. But he needed to secure his position both at home and abroad before making it an official foreign policy objective.

Dollfuss turned to Italy for help, rightly convinced that British and French aid would be ineffective. This shift in foreign policy can also be attributed to the fact that Dollfuss had to rely on the help of the anti-Marxist *Heimwehr* (Austrian paramilitary) to stay in power.

FAILED COUP

The Social Democrats were subjected to increasing provocation. On 12 February 1934, they took to arms. Civil war followed. After four days of fighting, Dollfuss and the *Heimwehr* were victorious. The Social Democratic Party was declared illegal and driven underground. In the course of the same year, all political parties were abolished except the Fatherland Front (*Vaterländische Front*), which Dollfuss had founded in 1933 to unite all conservative groups.

In April 1934 the rump of the parliament was brought together and accepted an authoritarian constitution. The executive was given complete control over the legislative branch of government: the elected assemblies disappeared and were replaced by advisory bodies, appointed in a complicated and futile fashion. The rights of man guaranteed under the democratic constitution were also swept away. "Republic" was removed from the official name of the state, which became merely the Federal State of Austria.

On 25 July 1934, a group of Austrian Nazis seized the Viennese chancellery and attempted to proclaim a government. Engelbert Dollfuss,

belonged to a new generation that had been educated in the conservative conviction that the Western form of parliamentary government had been forced upon the central Europeans as a result of military defeat and socialist revolution. They further believed that social order could be restored only by the establishment of some kind of strong authority. The leaders of the Christian Socialist Party found themselves under attack from two ideological enemies, the Marxists and the Nazis, who apparently threatened the very basis of the conservative order. In reaction, Dollfuss determined to replace parliamentary government with an authoritarian system.

CALLS FOR ANSCHLUSS

His opportunity came in March 1933, when, during a debate on a minor bill, an argument arose over alleged irregularities in the voting procedure. The president of the Nationalrat resigned; the two vice presidents followed his example, and Dollfuss declared that parliament had proved unworkable. It never met again in full, and thereafter Dollfuss governed by emergency decree.

By this time, Adolf Hitler was in power in Germany, and Nazi propaganda for the incorporation



whom they had taken prisoner, was murdered. The putschists appealed to Hitler for support. But Hitler could do nothing because the Fascist leader in Italy, Benito Mussolini, had sent heavy forces to the Brenner Pass to invade Italy in the event of a German intervention.

HITLER POLITIC

In avoiding this potential international crisis Hitler learned that if he were to take Austria without a struggle he would have to form an alliance with Italy. So while he set about making overtures to the fascist leader Mussolini, he sent ex-Reich Chancellor Franz von Papen as German ambassador to reduce Austria by other means.

Kurt von Schuschnigg, who had become Chancellor on the death of Dollfuss, was a man of gentler personality and less violent political passions. His administration of the authoritarian constitution was in the easygoing Austrian fashion, and less oppressive than in Italy and Germany. Schuschnigg had a mild preference for restoring the Hapsburgs, but he shrank from the international complications this would involve.

The regime drifted on without popular favour, weakened by the personal rivalries and ambitions of its leaders and sustained only by a guarantee from Italy. The temporary accord of Great Britain, France, and Italy – the ‘Stresa Front’ – formed in April 1935 seemed to promise new security, but the Ethiopian crisis soon destroyed the unity of the Western powers. Austria’s isolation was complete when Hitler and Mussolini allied themselves in 1936.

Schuschnigg had to negotiate a compromise with Germany, which was signed on 11 July 1936; Germany promised to respect Austrian sovereignty, and in return Austria acknowledged itself ‘a German state.’ The agreement left Austria open to Nazi infiltration. In January 1938 the Austrian police discovered a new Nazi conspiracy.



Schuschnigg hoped to defeat this by meeting with Hitler.

Hitler received Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden on 12 February 1938. As the Austrian President politely admired the magnificent view of the Bavarian Alps through the picture windows, Hitler rudely cut him short. ‘We did not come here to discuss the view and the weather,’ he said. A two-hour tirade against Schuschnigg and his government followed, ending with an ultimatum, whose effect was virtually to hand over Austria to Germany within a week. Schuschnigg was thoroughly browbeaten. His nerves were not improved by the fact that, an habitual chain-smoker, he had been forced to do without cigarettes during the long session because of Hitler’s aversion to the habit. He signed the ultimatum.

SCHUSCHNIGG COWED

Schuschnigg had to agree to give Austrian Nazis a general amnesty and to include some leading Nazis in his Cabinet; the Ministry of the Interior had to be entrusted to Arthur Seyss-Inquart, the spokesman of Austrian Nazis. The open agitation of the Nazis threatened to destroy the government’s authority, and

Above: Kurt von Schuschnigg was a skilled player on the Austrian political scene. However, his attempts to preserve Austrian sovereignty were crippled on the formation of the Rome-Berlin Axis.

Below: Schuschnigg’s attempt to defy Hitler and call for a referendum in March 1938 was brave but foolhardy. Here plebiscite posters are tossed into the streets upon news of the Chancellor’s resignation.





Above: Schuschnigg asked his countrymen whether they wanted Austria to continue as an independent state. Hitler's protege, Seyss-Inquart, presented Schuschnigg with another question: did the Chancellor want a plebiscite or a German invasion?

confidential contacts in the European capitals brought Schuschnigg to realize that he could not count on the support of the Great Powers.

PLEBISCITE DERAILED

He now made a decision that was both courageous and foolhardy. He decided to reaffirm Austria's independence, and scheduled a nationwide plebiscite for Sunday, 13 March to determine whether Austrians wanted a "free, independent, social, Christian and united Austria." Though this turn took Hitler unawares he acted with characteristic speed. He instructed his protege, Seyss-

Inquart, to present Schuschnigg immediately with an ultimatum: Postpone the plebiscite or face a German invasion. On 11 March Schuschnigg gave in and cancelled the plebiscite. But by then it was too late: not only was Goring urging immediate action, but the general unrest in Austria had given Hitler the excuse he needed for invasion – the pretext of restoring order.

HITLER INVADES

At the last minute Hitler thought of Mussolini, and decided that he owed the Duce some explanation of what he was about to do in Austria. As his intermediary he

employed Prince Philip of Hesse, a German aristocrat who had married a daughter of the King of Italy. When Prince Philip telephoned from Rome to report that Mussolini had assented "in a very friendly manner," Hitler gushed with praise: "Please tell Mussolini I will never forget him for this... Never, never, never... I shall stick with him whatever may happen, even if the whole world gangs up on him." In this Hitler was true to his word.

When German troops crossed into Austria on Saturday, 12 March they were welcomed with flowers and Nazi flags. Hitler arrived later that day to a rapturous reception in his hometown of Linz. A similar ovation greeted him in Vienna, scene of his dismal young manhood. As his big black Mercedes-Benz travelled the country's roads, adoring onlookers knelt to scoop up bits of earth the cars tires had touched.

In Vienna a Nazi government, headed by Arthur Seyss-Inquart, was established, and collaborated with Hitler in proclaiming the Anschluss on 13 March. Schuschnigg was arrested by the Nazis and interned in a concentration camp to be released only in May 1945.

EUROPEAN APPEASERS

What of the European reaction to this international outrage? There was a ministerial crisis in France, and the British government had made it known for some time that it would not oppose a union of Austria with Germany. The Government's weakness was summed up in the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's statement on the issue to the Commons on 14 March 1938:

"...In appraising recent events it is necessary to face facts, however we may judge them, however we may anticipate that they will react upon the international position as it exists today. The hard fact is – and of its truth every honourable Member can judge for himself – that nothing could have arrested this action by Germany unless we and

others with us had been prepared to use force to prevent it... This is not a moment for hasty decisions or for careless words."

France and Great Britain and all other governments accepted the Anschluss as a fait accompli. On 10 April, a plebiscite, held throughout greater Germany, recorded a vote of more than 99 percent in favour of Hitler's actions.

Austria was absorbed into Germany. Immediately after the invasion, the Nazis arrested the leaders of the Austrian political parties, and many Austrians, especially those of Jewish origin, went into exile. But the political antagonism that had previously weakened the status of the republic continued to block cooperation among the émigrés, as well as among the resistance groups that formed inside Austria.

POST-WAR AUSTRIA

The possibility of re-establishing an independent Austria was far from dead however, and after the outbreak of World War II, the Allied governments began to reconsider their attitude toward the Anschluss. In December 1941 Stalin informed the British that the U.S.S.R. would regard the restoration of an independent Austrian republic as an essential part of the postwar order in central Europe. In October 1943, at the meeting, convened in Moscow, of the foreign ministers of Great Britain, the U.S.S.R., and the United States a declaration was published that declared the Anschluss null and void, and pledged the Allies to restore Austrian independence. Winston Churchill, continued to push for the setting up of a central European federation comprising the former Hapsburg lands and even southern Germany. But the European Advisory Commission in London assumed that Austria would return to sovereignty within the borders of 1937. However, the ultimate decision lay with the Soviets. When the Red Army liberated Vienna on 13 April 1945. Stalin allowed the rekindling of parliamentary democracy



FIFTH COLUMN

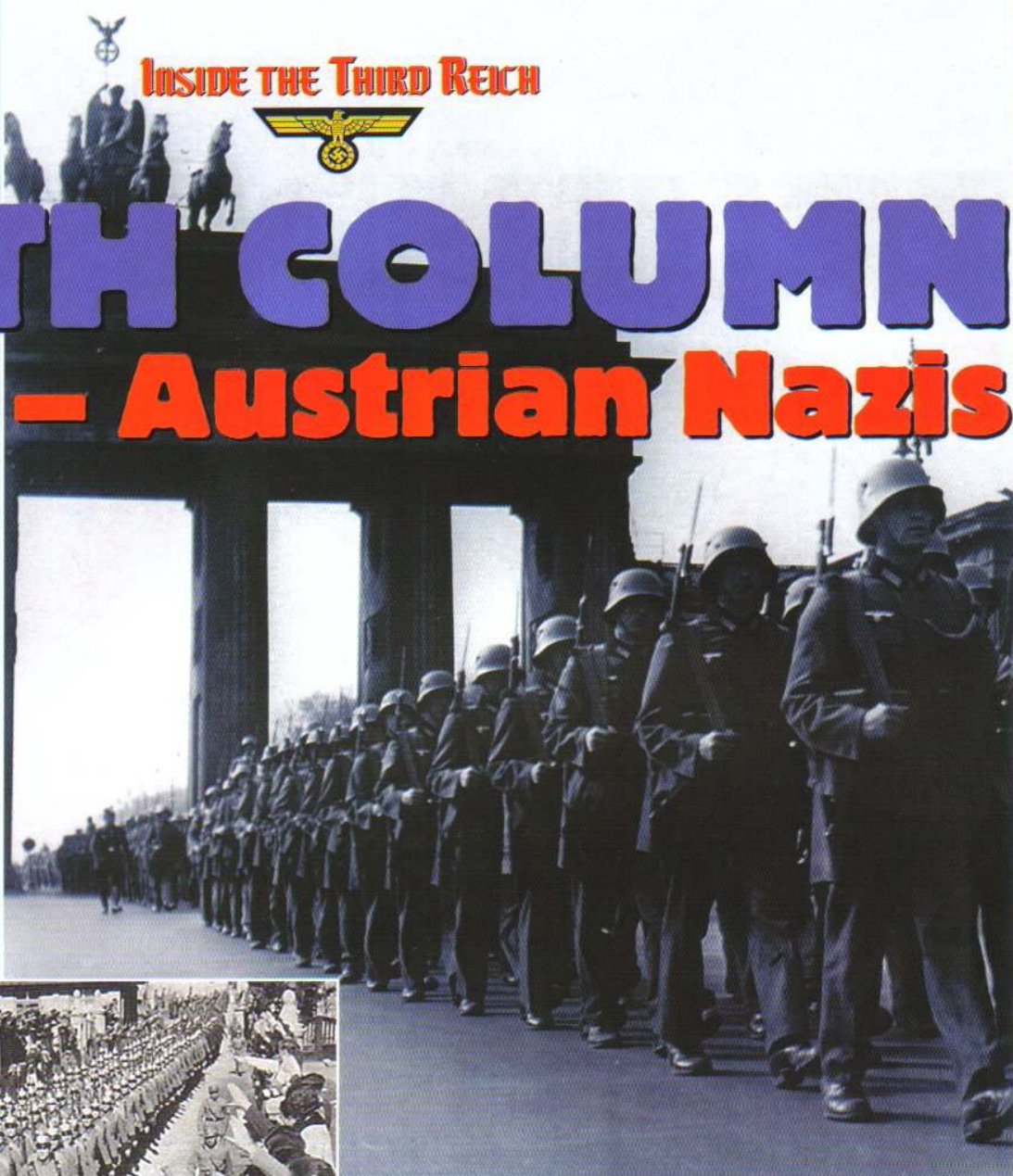
– Austrian Nazis

AS IN POST-WAR Germany, political life in Austria was polarised. The uncompromising slogans of left and right gave many hope in the uncertainty following the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Extremists like the Austrian Nazis had their fire stolen when in the early 1930s Austria drifted from democracy to authoritarian government, first under Dolfuss and then Schuschnigg. The attempted coup of February 1934 was actually suppressed by right-wing paramilitary supporters of the government.

But with Hitler growing ever more confident at home and abroad, it was only a matter of time before the aims of Austria's nazis were realised.

Right: Viennese Infantry Regiment No. 15 parades down the Unter dem Linden in Berlin on 24 March 1938. This was just the beginning of Austrian involvement with Hitler's Third Reich, which was to cost the country dear.



Left: Austrians in Innsbruck welcome the entry of a German police detachment. In the plebiscite held on 10 April 1938, 99.7 per cent of Austrians supported the Anschluss.

Below Left: On 12 March 1938 Austrian Nazis in Innsbruck welcome Hitler's decision to invade the country, and so replace one authoritarian government with another.

Above: Artur Seyss-Inquart announces that Austria has been absorbed into the Greater German Reich as the province of Ostmark. Austrian nazis would come to learn that they had made a pact with the Devil.



TRIUMPH AND

Pre-war German Expansionism



FIRST GAINS 1934/1935

HITLER'S FIRST foreign policy success was the occupation of the Saarland. This territory, of about 2,000 sq km and 800,000 citizens, had been effectively annexed to France under the terms of the Versailles Treaty.

In the Saarland elections of 1932, the NSDAP only polled 6.7 percent of the popular vote. After January 1933, a German Front was set up to agitate for a plebiscite on union with Germany. On 13 January 1935, 90 percent of the population voted for union. On 1 March 1935, the Saar territory was "brought home to the Reich".

On 7 March 1936, Hitler ignored his military advisors and sent troops into the demilitarised Rhineland. He had gambled successfully that the Western powers, who seriously over-estimated German military strength, would not use force to oppose the move.



AUSTRIA MARCH 1938

GREATLY ENCOURAGED by the lack of resistance to his expansionist policies, Hitler now cast his eyes on Austria.

This time, the most serious opposition came from Mussolini. *Il Duce* regarded Austria as being within his sphere of interest, and did not want to see a resurgent Germany right on his doorstep. Mussolini's outrage at an attempted Nazi coup in Vienna in 1934 forced Hitler to distance himself from the rebels.

By 1938, however, Hitler was more secure in his power. An *Anschluss* was only a matter of time, and it finally took place in March 1938. Mussolini was not happy, but nevertheless supported Hitler.

Nominally a union of two sovereign nations, the *Blumenkrieg*, or War of Flowers, was more of an invasion by Germany, though with the support of a significant part of the Austrian population.

APPEASEMENT

SUDETENLAND OCTOBER 1938

CZECHOSLOVAKIA WAS a new nation born of the turmoil at the end of World War I. It was a country with considerable ethnic diversity, and only 50 percent of its people were Czechs. There was a large German population concentrated in the East, in the industrial Sudeten area.

There had been hopes that the new nation would be a 'middle-European Switzerland'. But the different ethnic groups failed to meld. This was largely due to the discriminatory policy of the ruling Czech-national government, based in Prague.

The Nazis agitated for German and Hungarian self-rule. The failure of the Prague government to grant ethnic concessions led to a crisis in 1938. At the October 1938 summit in Munich, Hitler persuaded the British and the French to abandon the Czechs. The Sudetenland was given to Germany. Slovakia and the Carpathian Ukraine were granted autonomy.



CZECHOSLOVAKIA MARCH 1939

HITLER HAD DECLARED at Munich that the Sudetenland would be his last territorial demand in Europe. The British and French believed him, but the Czechs knew better as Germany piled on the diplomatic pressure, backed by the threat of force.

President Emile Hacha's government had no choice but to submit to German demands on anti-Semitic measures, party restructuring and legislation against German emigres. Even this was not enough for Hitler, whose boldness was fed by the weakness of France and Britain.

On 14 March the Czech government resigned, and Germany absorbed the rump of the State. The Wehrmacht occupied the country, and on 16 March the Czech Republic became the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. A government-in-exile was based in London under Edvard Benes, who would not return until 1945.





Karl Brandt

DOCTOR DEATH

Hitler's personal physician from 1933 to 1944, the able Professor Brandt was also entrusted with the extermination of Germany's 'useless eaters.'

ON 2 JUNE 1948 Dr Karl Brandt went to the gallows, one of 23 men convicted in the so-called 'Nazi doctors' trial at Nuremberg. Dr Brandt had been Reich Commissioner for Sanitation and Health from 1942-44, and one of Hitler's personal physicians since 1934. A *Brigadeführer* (Major-General) in the SS, he was personally responsible for the administration of Aktion T-4, the systematic murder of the mentally and physically handicapped that paved the way for the Holocaust.

Brandt's defence at Nuremberg echoes down to the present day. He made no apology for Aktion T-4; instead, he advanced a passionate argument

in favour of euthanasia. "Who would not have the desire to die while in good health rather than be forced by all the resources of medical science to continue life degraded to an animal's existence!" he said. Today, medical science is even better equipped to prolong human life than in Brandt's day. Yet the result, so often, is to lock people in the internal hell of senile dementia, their brains addled but their bodies sustained by drugs.

DIRTY GENE POOL

Yet Brandt's next sentence hinted at the evil roots of his philosophy. "Only misguided civilisation keeps such beings alive; in the normal struggle for existence Nature is more charitable." Brandt shared the

Social Darwinism of his Führer.

"I assented to euthanasia," Brandt concluded. "I fully realise the problem; it is as old as mankind, but it is not a crime against man nor against humanity. It is pity for the incurable, literally." The court cut through his defence, observing that the justification of euthanasia was not the issue. The practical consequences of the programme Brandt had organized were not the freeing of individuals from lives of torment. He had "given legality to plain murder and torture of defenceless human beings of other nations. The evidence is conclusive that almost at the outset of the programme, non-German nationals were selected for euthanasia and extermination." Many of the non-German nationals were, predictably, Jewish. And the courts had already heard enough about Nazi attitudes to the health of the nation. As Karl Koch, commandant of Auschwitz had actually bragged: "In my camp there were no sick people, only healthy and dead people."

EARLY PROMISE

Karl Brandt was born in Alsace in 1904, when it was temporarily part of Imperial Germany. (Alsace-Lorraine was annexed by Germany in 1871, but returned to France in 1919.) Brandt went to medical school in Germany

where he became acquainted with Dr Albert Schweitzer. Thoughts of joining Schweitzer at his practice in the French Congo were abandoned when it dawned on Brandt that, as an Alsatian, he would be liable for conscription into the French army.

HITLER'S PHYSICIAN

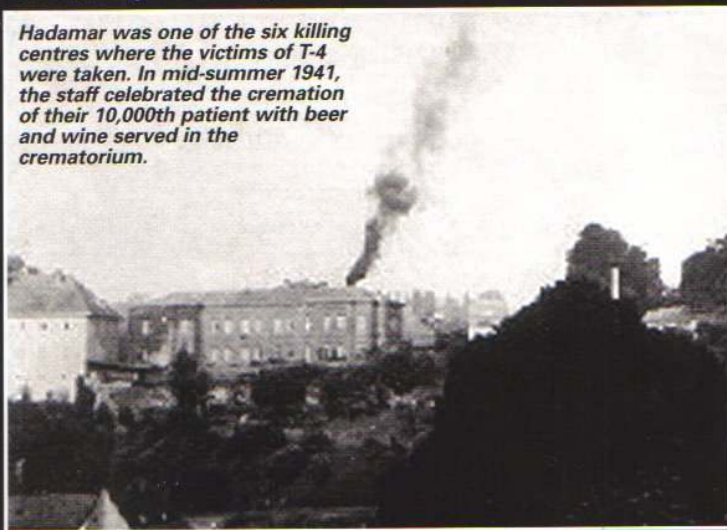
Brandt received a license to practise medicine in 1928. He then worked from a clinic in Bochum and joined the NSDAP in January 1932, and the SA in 1933.

In the summer of 1933, Dr Brandt was called to treat Hitler's adjutant Wilhelm Brückner and other members of Hitler's entourage who had been badly injured in a car accident. Aged only 29, Brandt made an immediate impression on Hitler and was invited to become one of the Führer's personal physicians. He became a regular member of the Obersalzberg set, sufficiently close to Hitler to warn him that the indiscriminate prescriptions written out by Dr Morell were likely to poison him – but not close enough for Hitler to listen.

DEATH CERTIFICATES

Euthanasia had powerful advocates in the medical profession during the 1930s, not just in Germany but in Scandinavia and the USA as well. However, the euthanasia programme begun on the authority of Dr Brandt was conducted in secrecy, with the death certificates of the victims falsified to disguise what was happening. Jewish hospital patients died first. The programme expanded to include medical experiments, sometimes on living subjects, with foreign prisoners of war prominent among the victims. It prepared the ground for the Holocaust, not just in the crossing of a moral threshold, but in the very methods employed. In January 1940 Dr Brandt accompanied Dr Leonardo Conti (German health minister) from Berlin to Brandenburg where they

Hadamar was one of the six killing centres where the victims of T-4 were taken. In mid-summer 1941, the staff celebrated the cremation of their 10,000th patient with beer and wine served in the crematorium.



witnessed the killing of four mental patients in a specially-built chamber which was flooded with carbon monoxide gas. In his study of the T-4 programme, Hugh Gregory Gallagher calls this 'a very small beginning of what was to become the largest crime of the 20th century.'

END OF T-4

The T-4 programme was officially terminated on 24 August 1941 after a verbal instruction from Hitler to Brandt. Public opposition to the slaughter had been aroused by the news that even disabled war veterans from World War I were being murdered in the institutions supposedly looking after them. Bishop von Galen singled out the T-4 programme in his famous anti-Nazi sermons that summer. However, the killing of disabled patients and children born with deformities continued in conditions of increased secrecy until 1945. The entire German medical establishment was deeply implicated in the continuation of this selective murder, but the near impossibility of getting doctors to testify against one another frustrated most of the post-war investigations after Brandt's conviction.

PILL PEDDLER

Karl Brandt's career came to a sudden end in September 1944. He fell out with Dr Theo Morell, the seedy pill peddler who enjoyed Hitler's total confidence. As Brandt explained at Nuremberg, "Morell took more and more to treatment by injections, until in the end he did all his work by this method... If Hitler had to deliver a speech on a cold or rainy day, he would have injections the day before, the day of the speech and the day after. The normal resistance of the body was gradually replaced by an artificial medium. When the war began, Hitler thought himself indispensable, and throughout the war received almost continual injections. During the last two years he was

In all, between 200,000 and 250,000 mentally and physically handicapped persons were murdered from 1939 to 1945 under the T-4 and other 'euthanasia' programmes.





Above: Brandt on a flying visit to the Eastern Front in January 1944. Hitler had appointed him general commissioner for health and sanitation, with control over all military and civilian medical institutions. Promoted Reichs commissioner in August 1944 he was soon to fall from grace.

Below: Brandt takes a stroll with Hitler in 1944 in the woods around Hitler's sanctuary. Brandt as the Führer's personal physician was often a visitor at Berchtesgaden where he was also a favourite of Eva Braun.



Above: Doctors Magnus (left) and Brandt in Paris after attending upon the mortally wounded diplomat Ernst von Rath, on 9 November 1938. Vom Rath's subsequent death was used as an excuse for the Kristallnacht pogrom.

injected daily. When I asked Morell to name the drugs employed, he refused." Brandt protested to Hitler that Morell's dubious treatments were threatening his life, but the Führer sided with Morell and Brandt found himself stripped of his rank and posts. Two other staff doctors supported Brandt's assertions. Doctors Giesing and Hasselbach observed that the excessive quantities of 'anti-gas' pills Morell fed Hitler ran a serious risk of strychnine poisoning. But Hitler fired them too and for the last six months left to him, the Führer relied exclusively on Doctor Morell.

BRANDT'S ARREST

Brandt looked set to sit out the rest of the war, but on 16 April 1945, he was arrested on Hitler's personal orders and brought before a summary court. It was said his wife had fled to Western Germany to surrender herself and their children to the Americans.

Hitler Youth leader Artur Axmann presided over a kangaroo court, that sentenced Brandt to death for the crime of defeatism. The real reason why Hitler ordered the death of his doctor may never be known. Hitler's diminishing court underneath the rubble of the Chancellery was a hotbed of lethal intrigue that saw Hermann Goering condemned to death and Eva Braun's brother-in-law executed. Whether Morell had the power or inclination to demand his professional rival's head was doubted by Albert Speer who said it was the work of Martin Bormann. Schellenberg thought Brandt had become ensnared in the poisonous rivalry between the Braun sisters and Martin Bormann. However, Brandt found himself alive at the end of the month, preserved by the interventions of Himmler and Speer. Released from his cell at Kiel, he enjoyed a brief period of freedom before his arrest by the US military authorities.



NAZI DOCTORS

THE NAZIS decided that the traditional debate on the ethics of experimenting on humans did not apply to them. Throughout the war years, at concentration camps and various dedicated research centres, experiments were carried out to benefit the German armed forces. Interestingly, the data collected on high altitude experiments was widely used by most countries in post-war research. Certain defendants were also accused of carrying out sterilisation and euthanasia programmes on the general German population.

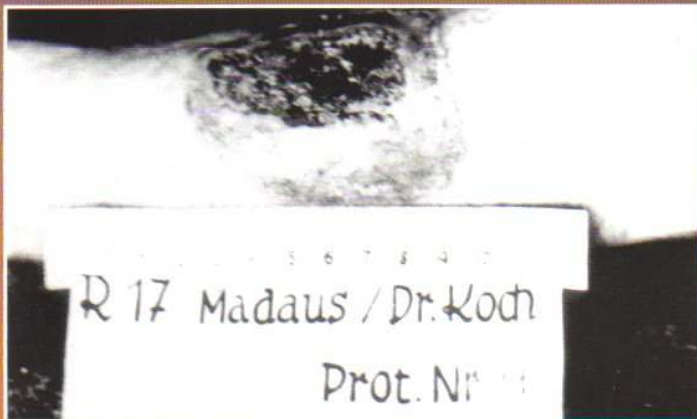
The Nazi doctors who participated in the tests were singled out and subjected to trial at Nuremberg from October 1946.

The physicians were indicted for crimes against humanity and war crimes. Included in the specified charges were claims that the accused had forcibly subjected tens of thousands of PoWs, concentration camp inmates and ordinary civilians to inhumane medical experimentation.

The brutalities listed included experiments involving high-altitude, freezing, malaria, mustard gas, sulfanilamide, bone, muscle and nerve regeneration, epidemic jaundice, sterilization, sea water, spotted fever, poison and incendiary.

Bottom: On 17 August 1947 judgment at Nuremberg was passed down on the doctors. Apart from those destined to hang, five were given life imprisonment, and four were awarded terms of up to 20 years. The prison sentences were reduced in 1951.


Below: Experiments were performed at Buchenwald and Ravensbrueck concentration camps to test the effects of various pharmaceuticals on phosphorous burns. The burns inflicted with the contents of incendiary bombs resulted in horrific scarring.



Above: Of the original 16 defendants seven were sentenced to hang (clockwise from top): Wolfram Sievers, Karl Gebhardt, Joachim Mrugowsky, Waldemar Hoven, Viktor Brack, Rudolf Brandt and Karl Brandt were executed at Landsberg prison on 2 June 1948.



Maritime Air War

A large, multi-engine aircraft, the Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor, is shown in flight against a cloudy sky. The aircraft is dark-colored with white markings, including the Nazi cross on the wings and tail. It has four engines mounted on the wings and a large fuselage. The aircraft is angled upwards and to the right, with its wings and tail clearly visible.

The Atlantic was one of the most important theatres in all of World War II. Winning the battle meant survival for Britain, and ultimate defeat for Germany. The decisive factor was air power.

The Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor was Germany's primary long-distance maritime patrol aircraft in the first years of the war. Never available in large numbers, it was called the "Scourge of the Atlantic" by Churchill.



German maritime aircraft were supposed to work closely with the navy, but because of inter-service rivalries the combination never achieved total efficiency. Even so, flying boats like the Blohm & Voss Bv 138 did locate targets for the U-boat force to attack, particularly on the Arctic convoy routes.

IN 1939, ALL OF THE world's major navies regarded the battleship as the supreme arbiter of war at sea – Japan and the USA included. Few could have foreseen that in a matter of months, the mighty gun-armed warship would be outclassed and outfought by naval aircraft.

Attitudes were revised in the harsh light of experience. The lessons proved costly for some: the attack on the Italian fleet at Taranto, the pursuit and sinking of the *Bismarck*, the attack on Pearl Harbor and the sinking of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* off Malaya. Even so, the integration of air power into naval operations in most countries continued to be affected by service rivalries.

SERVICE RIVALRY

Coordination between the German navy and air force was particularly bad. The technology to defeat Britain by naval blockade was there, but Hitler's admirals, in common with most of their contemporaries, preferred battleships to submarines and aircraft, and his airmen thought only of the land battle.

It could have been very different. Hitler's accommodation with the British that produced the London Naval Treaty in 1935 was one of the high points in the career of Nazi foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop. To the surprise of all concerned, the British agreed to a tonnage ratio of 100:35 in their favour, but otherwise raised no objections to the rebirth of an ocean-going navy flying the German flag, nor to a German naval air force allowed as many as 700 aircraft.

GERMAN FLEET PLANS

The Kriegsmarine building programme that followed was intended to create a balanced fleet within seven years: by 1942 a modern battle fleet would be supported by cruisers, destroyers and two aircraft carriers. The keels of two 22,000 ton carriers were laid down in 1936. The *Graf Zeppelin* was launched in 1938 and was nearly finished when war broke out in 1939.

Intended to carry an air group of about 40 aircraft – navalised versions of the Ju 87 dive-bomber and the Bf 109 fighter – the *Graf Zeppelin* might have made a major

difference to the naval war. But work on the vessel was stopped long before completion when Hitler cancelled any project not due to be finished by the end of 1940. This was, after all, the era of 'lightning war' and the Führer expected to have conquered Europe by the end of that year.

GOERING INTERFERES

This decision left the Kriegsmarine without any real air cover. Hermann Goering had already scuppered the idea of an independent naval air arm, exploiting his close relationship with Hitler to secure exclusive control of German military aviation for his Luftwaffe.

As events soon proved, maritime air power was of critical importance in the Battle of the Atlantic, in the Mediterranean and in the bloody saga of the Arctic convoys.

Although Goering put a stop to talk of a German equivalent to the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, the Luftwaffe did little to fill the gap. The High Command had almost no interest in maritime aircraft beyond the acquisition of a few squadrons of flying boats. Its most

famous maritime strike aircraft started life as a civilian airliner.

The Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor was designed as a German technology showpiece. Planned to be the first airliner able to cross the Atlantic non-stop, it achieved this objective in a 25-hour flight from Berlin to New York in 1938. In 1939 the Luftwaffe ordered a military version of the four-engined machine, intended to attack Allied shipping far out in the Atlantic. Its own intended long-range bomber, the Heinkel He 177, was well behind schedule.

LONG-RANGE ACTION

Kampfgeschwader 40, a specialist maritime unit, was equipped with the Fw 200. It made its first attacks on naval targets from bases in Denmark in April 1940, before transferring to Bordeaux-Mérignac in June. To the frustration of Admiral Doenitz, liaison arrangements with the air force remained haphazard; not until January 1941 did he obtain Hitler's agreement that the navy should have operational control of KG 40.

Designed to carry civil loads, the FW200's airframe was not robust enough for its combat role



Above: With its long range and endurance – one of the prototypes flew non-stop from Berlin to New York – the Condor could cover a lot of sea in a single patrol. Its primary function was to locate convoys for the Kriegsmarine's marauding U-boat Wolf Packs.

Below: The Condor was much more than the German navy's 'eye in the sky,' however, since it could carry over two tonnes of bombs. Between August 1940 and February 1941 a single unit – KG 40 – accounted for 85 British vessels, sinking more than 300,000 tonnes of Allied shipping.



Below: The major problem with the Condor was that it was designed as an airliner, not as a warplane. The pressures of military flying while carrying heavy fuel and weapons loads strained the slender airframe – often past breaking point, as seen here.



and mishaps dogged its wartime career. Despite having strengthened fuselages, a number of military Fw 200s snapped in half during heavy landings. Manufacturing output was slow – only 252 aircraft were built by the time production ended in February 1944. KG40 seldom had more than a dozen operational aircraft.

Even with such small numbers, KG40 was credited with sinking 90,000 tons of shipping over the summer of 1940. The Condor's score would rise rapidly to more than 350,000 tons by 1941, earning the big machine the Allied nickname of 'Scourge of the Atlantic.' Unfortunately for its crews, the Condor was vulnerable to interception by almost any Allied aircraft. Even the giant British Sunderland flying boats could overhaul a Condor.

IMPROVISED DEFENCE

Desperately short of aircraft carriers, the British fitted 35 (of a planned 250) merchant ships with a launching ramp that could send a Hawker Hurricane on a one-way mission. Known as a CAM-ship (standing for Catapult-Armed Merchantman), this expedient proved remarkably successful. During 170 round-trips across the Atlantic, only eight launches are recorded but they led to six Condor 'kills' by the 'Hurricat' pilots. The Fw 200s were obliged to keep their distance.

The Condors ended their career preying mainly on the Gibraltar-UK convoys, relying on intelligence reports from Spain to time their flights so as to intercept the shipping. Some Fw 200s were fitted with radio-guided anti-ship missiles pioneered by the Germans in 1943. However, the main role of the Fw 200 continued to be reconnaissance flights over the North Atlantic. They flew shuttle missions between Bordeaux and Norway, locating convoys for the U-boats to attack. In this they were supplemented from October 1943 by small numbers of the larger and more robust Junkers Ju 290.

Coastal Command was the RAF's Cinderella service: equipped with elderly, inadequate

aircraft (and not enough of them) it strove to locate German blockade runners, surface raiders and — above all — U-boats. Both sides realised that the aircraft available at the beginning of the war lacked the endurance to cover the whole of the North Atlantic.

MID-ATLANTIC GAP

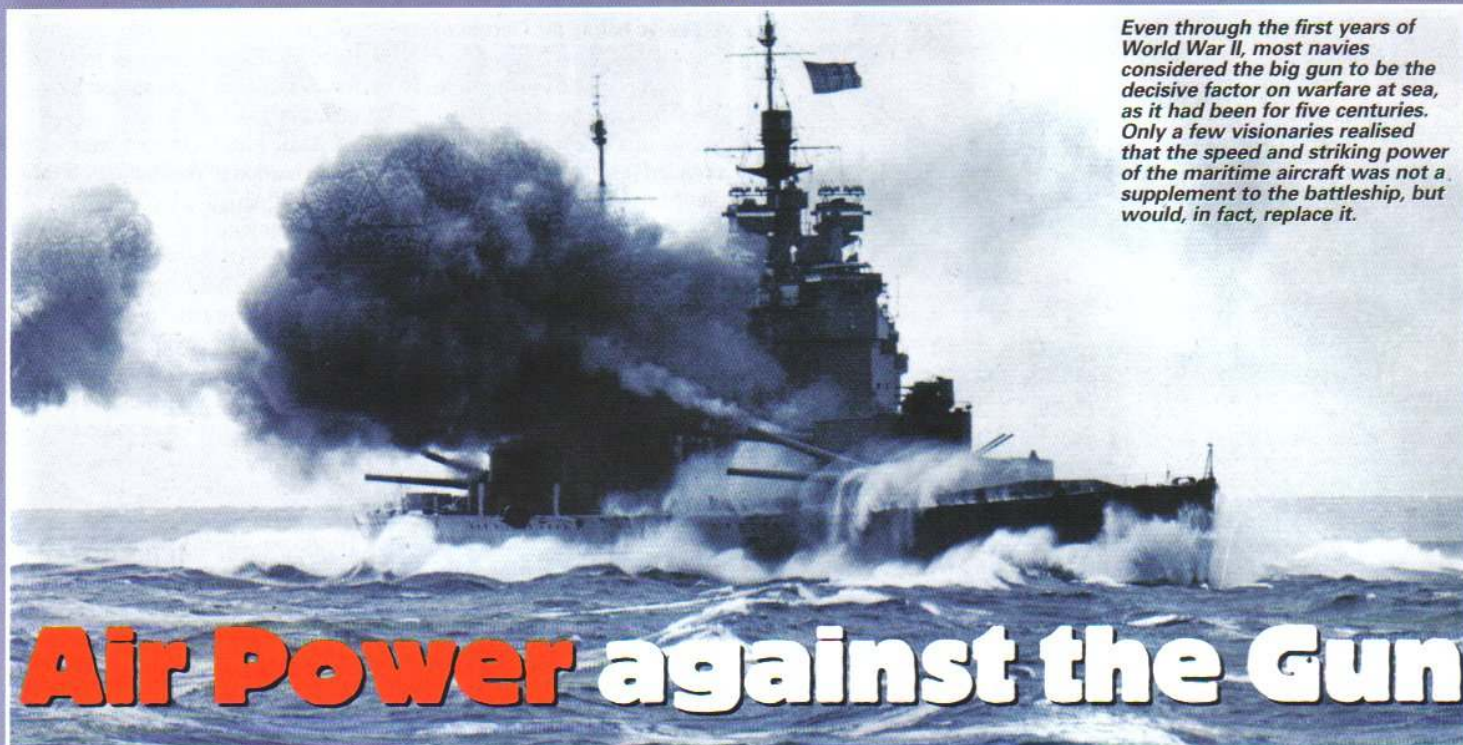
There was a 'gap,' originally nearly 2,000 miles across, which could not be patrolled by aircraft from Canada or Britain. Here the U-boats took their fearful toll of Allied Merchant shipping. RAF Bomber Command replaced its twin-engine bombers with the four-engined Halifaxes and Lancasters, both with great potential as maritime patrol aircraft. However Sir Arthur Harris, head of Bomber Command, refused to release them, arguing that it was easier to destroy U-boats in their lairs at Lorient, rather than in the vast wastes of the Atlantic. Hundreds of aircraft were lost attacking the heavily-defended U boat pens: their reinforced concrete roofs were proof against all the bombs aimed at them. Not one U-boat was lost this way.

With the entry of the USA into the war, US aircraft production rose rapidly. Coastal Command and the US Navy began to receive Consolidated B-24 Liberators, B-17s and other bombers, equipped for maritime patrols. VLR (Very Long Range) aircraft spelt the end of the U-boats' freedom of action in the Atlantic.

Until mid-1942, only a handful of boats had been damaged, let alone sunk, by air attack. An alert crew could crash-dive in under 30 seconds, leaving little time for an aircraft to line up for a bomb-run.

AIRBORNE RADAR

However, the introduction of centimetric radar enabled the Allied aircraft to detect U-boats at night or in poor visibility. Admiral Doenitz read a flood of contact reports from U-boats that had narrowly survived the surprise onslaught of an aircraft, dazzling the deck watch with a searchlight and deluging the boat with



Even through the first years of World War II, most navies considered the big gun to be the decisive factor on warfare at sea, as it had been for five centuries. Only a few visionaries realised that the speed and striking power of the maritime aircraft was not a supplement to the battleship, but would, in fact, replace it.

Air Power against the Gun

THE GERMAN NAVY discovered the danger from aircraft during the invasion of Norway. The cruiser *Konigsberg* was sunk in Bergen harbour by Fleet Air Arm Skua dive-bombers, the first major warship to be lost to air attack under combat conditions. In June 1940 the battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* sank the British aircraft carrier *Glorious*, but this was one of the few occasions when gun-armed warships got the better of carriers. Subsequent raids into the Atlantic were to be bedevilled by aircraft, and it was an aerial torpedo from a Swordfish that doomed the *Bismarck* in 1941. Her sister ship *Tirpitz* spent most of her short life holed up in Norwegian fjords, awaiting the next air attack. Successive strikes by carrier-borne aircraft were the prelude to her destruction by RAF heavy bombers.

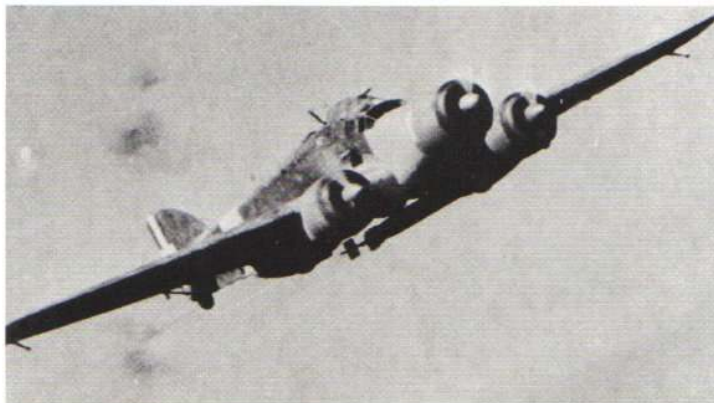
Below left: One harsh lesson that air power taught all navies fighting in coastal waters was that you carried as heavy an anti-aircraft fit as possible. As these RAF Beaufighters in the North Sea show, even a heavy gun armament was not always enough.

Bottom: The ultimate proof that the aircraft had displaced the gun came in the Pacific. IJN Yamato and Musashi, the largest and heaviest-gunned battleships ever built, were overwhelmed and sunk by swarms of dive bombers and torpedo bombers flying from US Navy carriers.

Below: The addition of rockets gave the anti-shipping aircraft a formidable boost in firepower. A salvo of eight high-explosive projectiles was considered equivalent in power to a destroyer broadside.

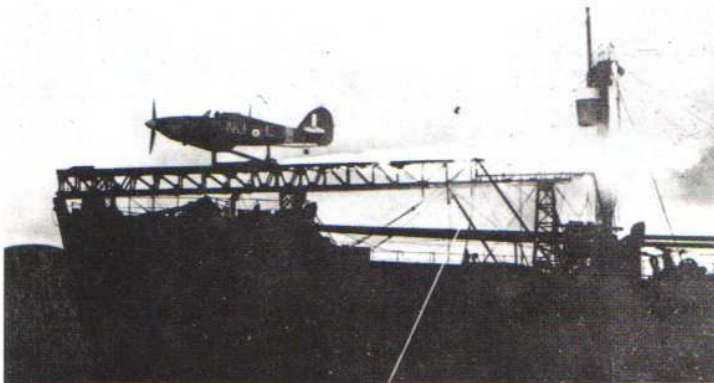


HITLER'S BATTLES 24



Above: Air power had a major part to play in the Mediterranean, as shipping lanes were rarely far from land bases. Anti-shipping strike was one of the few major strengths of Italy's Regia Aeronautica.

Below: Britain's primary long-range patroller was the Short Sunderland flying boat. It was nicknamed the 'Flying Porcupine' by German Zerstörer pilots, due to its ability to defend itself from fighter attack.



Above: The first hasty counter Britain made to the Condor threat was to send catapult-launched Hurricanes with convoys. Strictly a one-shot weapon, the CAM ship was effective in keeping the Condors at bay.

Below: Once escort carriers were available to deal with the Condors, it was left to long-range patrol aircraft like the Consolidated Liberator to provide the 24-hour cover that would eventually defeat the U-boat.



explosive before the Germans knew it was there. Many other boats simply failed to report in. They were last seen by the tail gunner of a B-24, stern pointing skywards as they took their last plunge into the Atlantic.

MEDITERRANEAN

The air war in the Mediterranean went slightly differently. The Italian navy experienced the same interservice problems as its German ally, also failing to obtain either aircraft carriers or its own naval aviation arm by 1939. It was assumed that the battle fleet would never be out of range of Italian land-based aircraft, but even so arrangements to coordinate the two frequently broke down. The Fleet Air Arm's raid on Taranto put three Italian battleships on the harbour bottom in November 1940, and the Battle of Cape Matapan in March 1941 virtually eliminated the Italian Navy as a fighting force. The modern battleship *Vittorio Veneto* escaped the massacre of a cruiser squadron by radar-equipped British battleships, but by the summer, most of the Italian heavy units were immobilised for lack of fuel.

ITALIAN SUCCESSES

While the Italian air force never managed to operate successfully with the Navy, it was much more effective as an offensive arm in its own right. Unlike the Luftwaffe, which had dismissed as impractical the notion of aerial-launched torpedoes, the Italians modified several aircraft for anti-shipping missions. British convoys to Malta were targeted by SM.79s which attacked with a determination seldom matched by the Italian army.

When the Luftwaffe's *Fliegerkorps X* arrived in Sicily British losses soared. The German bombing campaign against Malta in 1942 forced the Royal Navy to evacuate its surface ships and even its submarines for a period, but air power alone was not enough to subdue the island. The planned assault by German and Italian parachutists and marines was abandoned. The island resumed its

role as a vital air and submarine base, from which supplies for Axis forces in Africa were subject to increasing attack.

While Italian convoys were being harried to destruction off the shores of Africa, Allied merchantmen fought for their lives on the edge of the Arctic ice pack. In these high northern latitudes, the summer months brought almost 24-hour daylight. Learning from the Italians, the Luftwaffe modified Ju 88 and Heinkel He 111 bombers to launch torpedoes. When convoy PQ17 was ordered to scatter in July 1941 – the Admiralty wrongly believing *Tirpitz* was closing the convoy – torpedo bombers accounted for 14 of the 22 ships sunk.

ESCORT CARRIERS

The next convoy, PQ 18, included the escort carrier *HMS Avenger*. Its air group was tiny – just 12 Sea Hurricanes and three Swordfish. The Germans mounted a high level attack by Ju 88s to draw off the British fighters, then 40 torpedo-bombers raced in just above the waves. Eight ships were hit. By the time the convoy reached Russia, 18 ships had been sunk, although 41 German aircraft were shot down. One bomber crew had the misfortune to survive a crash-landing on the sea, only to drown when the U-boat that rescued them was itself depth-charged and sunk with all hands. But it was the sign of things to come, and once convoys could rely on their own air cover together with that of long-range bombers, losses fell dramatically.

DECISIVE DEFEAT

By the time Doenitz had the submarine force he had argued for in the 1930s, the Allies dominated the ocean skies. Without adequate air support of their own, the U-boats switched from being hunters of the seas to mere prey, and a potentially war-winning weapon was wasted. The decision to ignore maritime air power cost Germany the Battle of the Atlantic, and losing the Battle of the Atlantic was a key factor in the defeat of Hitler and the Nazis.



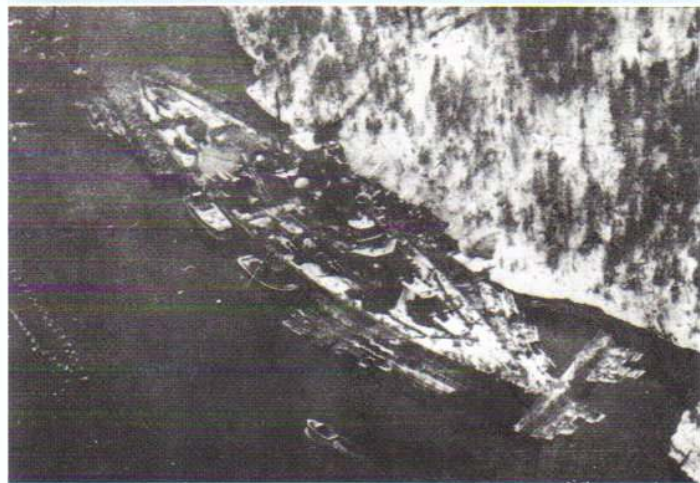
The Tirpitz Threat

Displacing over 50,000 tonnes and armed with eight 15-inch guns, the *Tirpitz* was an immensely powerful warship. The Royal Navy's fear was that it would sortie against Allied convoys.



FOLLOWING THE SINKING the *Bismarck* in May 1941, its sister ship *Tirpitz* became the major headache for Britain's Royal Navy. The biggest fear was that the massive battleship, holed up deep inside a Norwegian fiord, might make a raid on the vital Arctic convoys taking supplies to Russia. Spotted and attacked only once in the open sea, by Swordfish from HMS *Victorious*, the *Tirpitz* remained moored for most of the war.

As a 'threat in being', the battleship had to be dealt with, and it became the subject of repeated British attacks. Damaged at the end of 1943 by midget submarines, it was air power which was destined to finish the *Tirpitz* off. At least five attacks were launched by Fleet carriers in 1944, causing enough damage to immobilise the *Tirpitz*. It was land-based air power in the shape of the Avro Lancaster which finally administered the *coup de grace*, on 12 November 1944.



Above: A Royal Navy reconnaissance picture of the *Tirpitz* in Altenfiord, surrounded by high hills to prevent easy access for attacking aircraft, and by torpedo nets to hamper any underwater attacks.



Above: *Tirpitz* lies upside down in the waters of Altenfiord in northern Norway. The battleship was sunk in November by Avro Lancasters of the RAF's 617 and IX squadrons.

Below: The Lancasters were specially modified to carry six-ton 'Tallboy' bombs. At least two of the 28 weapons dropped scored direct hits, the massive explosions being enough to capsize the battleship.



Below: The first Fleet Air Arm attack on *Tirpitz*, Operation Tungsten, was launched in April 1944. It was followed by attacks in July and a series of attacks in August, each involving 30 to 40 Barracuda strike aircraft.

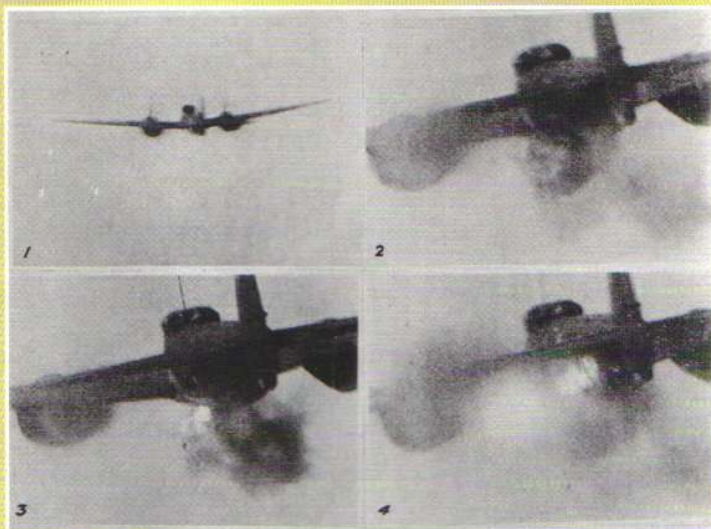




Battle of the Bay

NOWHERE WAS THE MARITIME AIR WAR fought more fiercely than over the Bay of Biscay. Although known for its frequent treacherous storms and heavy seas, the bay had one major advantage to the Germans. By basing U-boats in ports like Brest, La Rochelle and Bordeaux, the Kriegsmarine could get into the operational area in the Atlantic much more quickly than from home ports in Germany. Since they consumed much less fuel in the process, the Wolf Packs could spend more time prowling the convoy routes. Unfortunately it also brought them within striking distance of British air and sea units operating from bases in the southwest of England.

Much of the work was done by the RAF's Coastal Command. Aircraft patrolled the bay constantly, looking for U-boats setting out on or returning from patrols. They were also expected to keep watch for blockade runners as well as surface raiders – which could be anything from a converted merchant ship to the battlecruisers *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. In the early days the RAF was hard pressed to find aircraft with the range to do the job, especially when carrying enough weaponry to attack a ship or to defend themselves against air attack. By 1942, however, aircraft like the Vickers Wellington and the Bristol Beaufighter were in service, deploying new sensors and weapons. There were never enough German aircraft to match the British, and as a result U-boats trying to break out into the Atlantic had to run a gauntlet of death without friendly air cover.



Above: A Junkers Ju 88 heavy fighter is intercepted and shot to pieces by a prowling RAF Mosquito. Allied control of the air over the Bay of Biscay was the decisive factor in the defeat of the U-boats.

Left: Aircraft like the Bristol Beaufighter proved devastating in the anti-shipping role. With its powerful armament of four 20-mm cannon, eight machine guns and eight rockets, it could sink a surfaced U-boat, or at the very least damage it badly enough that it was unable to dive.

Below: Damaged while submerging, by bombs from a Sunderland flying boat, this U-boat is attempting to fight back. However, the relatively lightly-armed submarine is much easier to hit than the faster-moving aircraft, and it provides an easy target for the Sunderland's gunners.



Below: Having ensured that his target cannot escape by diving, the Sunderland pilot has swung round to drop a depth charge by the boat. The detonation ripped a huge hole in the U-boat's hull, and after an internal explosion a few seconds later, it sank with all hands.



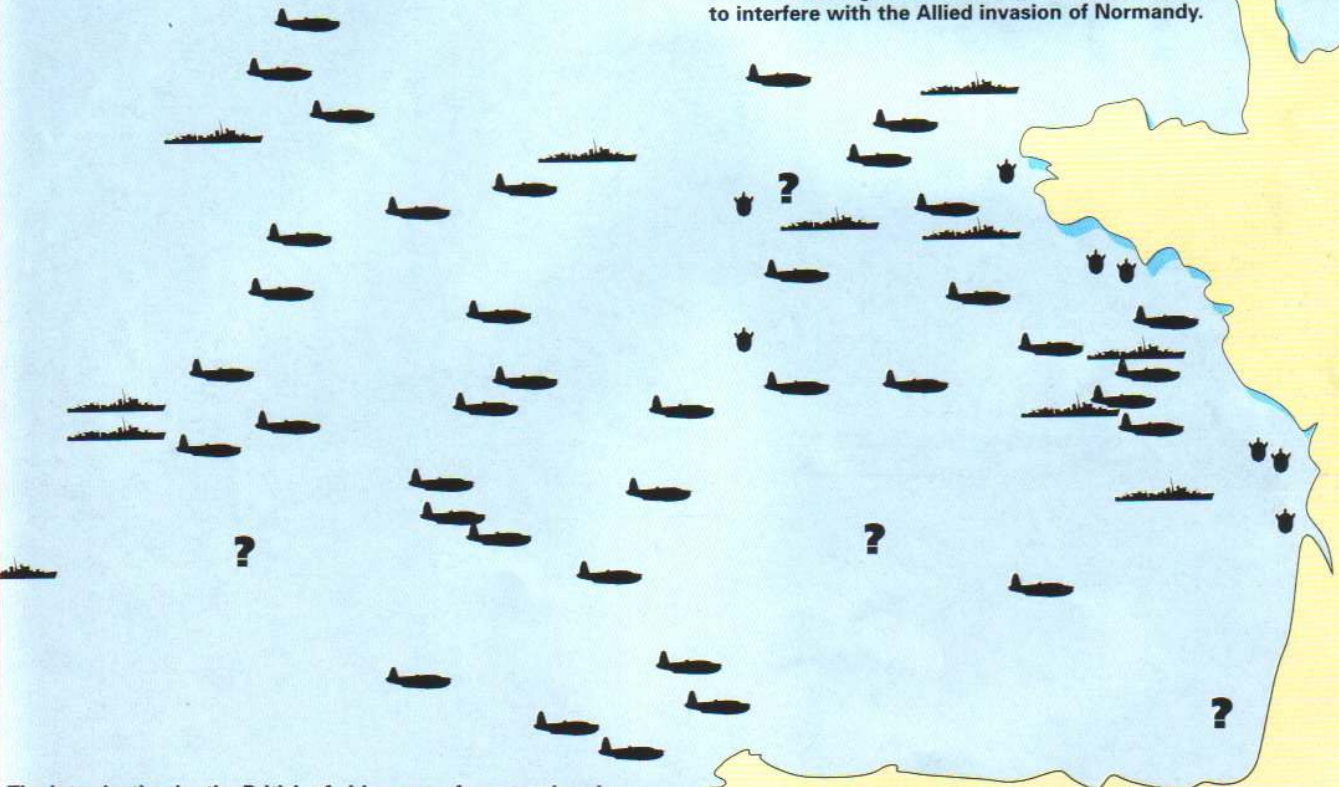


U-Boat losses

BY EARLY 1943, aircraft were not only threatening U-boats in the Atlantic, but were regularly intercepting them in the Bay of Biscay. At first, the Luftwaffe tried to counter Allied attacks by patrolling with long-range fighters. But the Ju 88 *Zerstörer* was no match for the British Beaufighter, let alone the fighter versions of the Mosquito which were now entering service with Coastal Command. Combat losses left fewer and fewer Ju 88s available to challenge the Allies over the Bay, which Doenitz described as "the playground of English aircraft".

To maximise their time on patrol across the shipping lanes, the U-boats really needed to transit the bay on the surface. But now Allied aircraft compelled them to stay submerged by day, coming up at dusk like marine vampires to seek their prey. Maritime aircraft achieved an increasing proportion of U-boat 'kills' and would ultimately account for more U-boats destroyed than the surface escorts.

Omitted from this map are the 18 boats sunk in the English Channel between June and August 1944. They were lost as the Kriegsmarine attempted unsuccessfully to interfere with the Allied invasion of Normandy.



The introduction by the British of airborne surface-search radar and new aids like the Leigh Light – a powerful nose-mounted searchlight – left the U-boats extremely vulnerable. Fears that their own Metox radar detector (*Biskaykreuz* or 'Biscay Cross') emitted a signal that was itself detectable led many U-boat skippers to leave it below decks and rely on sharp-eyed lookouts with binoculars. Other commanders decided to fight it out on the surface, and U-boats increased their anti-aircraft armament. The main gun was often landed, and 37-mm and even quadruple 20-mm *Flakvierling* mountings were added to the 'winter garden' platform abaft the tower. The only real solution to Allied air superiority was to stay submerged: hence the *schnorkel* introduced in 1943 and the advanced 'Type XXI' and 'Type XXIII' *elektroboote*, which entered service late in the war.

Key

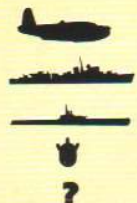
Sunk by aircraft

Sunk by surface vessel

Sunk by submarine

Sunk by mine

Last reported position of boats never seen again



HITLER'S WAR MACHINE



The German Army's schwere Granatwerfer 34 gained an enviable reputation among Allied frontline troops for its accuracy and rate of fire. It was also very robust and easy to manufacture.

INFANTRY SUPPORT WEAPONS



The Flammenwerfer 35 in action against an enemy strongpoint. The model's components were largely unchanged from WWI. The equipment weighed a substantial 35.8 kg and so was often carried into action by two men. Carrying enough fuel for 10 seconds of use the weapon remained in production until 1941.

The modern battlefield, with its uncertain dynamics, necessitates infantry carrying their own artillery. The German army was the first to realise this.

Infantry support weapons are those that are part of the battalion's inventory and are not 'on call' like artillery or air power. In the mobile battlefields of World War II infantry could not count on any artillery unit being close enough to give support in case of trouble.

DEDICATED WEAPONRY

Therefore, the natural solution was to give the infantry their own dedicated heavy weaponry. This consisted of mortars, flame-throwers, anti-tank weapons and light artillery.

The classic infantry support weapon is the medium mortar, and the German army was well equipped with the 8-cm *schwere Granatwerfer* 34. The weapon was carried into action as a three man load, consisting of base plate, barrel and bipod. It entered service in 1934 and was still in use at the end of hostilities. A wide range of ammunition was developed

including the 8-cm *Wurfgranate* 39 'bouncing bomb', as well as conventional HE, smoke, target illumination and target marking ordnance. The mortar weighed 56.7 kg in action and could be elevated from 40° to 90°. Its range of traverse was from 9° to 15°.

The range of a mortar shell is controlled by the amount of propellant or charge. This is typically rated between 1 and 6, 6 being the maximum. The charge is placed into the firing tube prior to loading the shell. The minimum range for the 3.5 kg shell on Charge 1 was 60 metres and the maximum on Charge 5 was 2,400 metres.

HEAVY MORTARS

The 12-cm *Granatwerfer* 42, which entered service with the German army in 1942, started life as the Russian Model 38 heavy mortar. On the Eastern Front, the big mortar fired a heavier bomb further than any mortar in the German inventory.



Above: The 5-cm leichte Granatwerfer 36 was one of the standard Wehrmacht light mortars of the early war years. However, it proved too complex and expensive for wartime production.

Initially, captured weapons, designated 12-cm Gr.W.378 (r), were pressed into service and then the 12-cm Gr.W.42 was produced capable of firing both Russian or German ammunition. On Charge 1 it could fire a 15.8 kg bomb to 300 metres, and on Charge 6 to 6,025 metres. The 12-cm Gr.W.42 had a two wheel carriage that could be attached to the base plate and could be gravity- or trigger-fired. This versatility made it a popular weapon and even replaced infantry guns in some battalions.

The *Gebirgsjaeger*, or Mountain Troops, had a number of lightweight guns, some of which were deployed in conventional operations by line infantry. The 7.5-cm *leichte*

Gebirgs Infanterieschutz 18. L/11.8 weighed 440 kg in action and fired a 5.45 kg or 6 kg shell out to 3,550 metres. It could also fire a 3 kg hollow-charge shell in an anti-tank role. The spoked-wheel variant could be broken down into six or ten loads for pack transport. The heaviest load weighed 74.9 kg. Waffen-SS troops used a version with pneumatic tyres.

The replacement for the 7.5-cm *leichte Gebirgs Infanterieschutz* 18. L/11.8 7.5-cm was the 7.5-cm *Gebirgseschütz* 36. L/19.3.



Above: Opponents feared the accuracy and rate of fire of the German 8-cm sGrW34. But this reputation owed more to the thorough training of the crews than to design excellence.

Below: The Waffen SS grenadier in the foreground is armed with a Kar 98K rifle fitted with a Schiessbecker grenade launcher. This fired an array of fin-stabilised grenades of limited range.

This gun was designed by Rheinmetall in 1935. It entered service in 1938. The gun incorporated the unusual features of variable recoil and large muzzle brake.

GERMAN INGENUITY

As the war swung against Nazi Germany, there was a search for improvisation and expedients to keep soldiers in the front line supplied with weapons. Two of these were the 7.5-cm IG 37. L/22 and the 7.5-cm IG 42. L/22. These weapons used the 7.5-cm Pak 37, a captured cut-down Russian gun. It was mounted on the carriage of the obsolete 3.7-cm Pak 35/36, or the carriage of the captured Russian 27-mm Model 1930 anti-tank gun that had been used by the Germans as the 3.7-cm Pak 158(r). A muzzle brake was fitted, and the gun could fire a wide range of ammunition including a hollow-charge shell in an anti-

tank role.

RECOIL FREE

The design principles of the recoilless weapons that were widely used by NATO from the 1950s to the 90s can be traced back to the 7.5-cm *Leichtgeschütz* 40. L/10. This gun first saw action in Crete in 1941. It was a recoilless weapon that used an open breach with a venturi. It shared these features with the later 7.5-cm *Ruckstossfreie Kanone* 43, the 10.5-cm *Leichtgeschütz* 40. L/13, the 10.5-cm *Leichtgeschütz* 42. L/17.5 and the 10.5-cm *Leichtgeschütz* 43. The case of the shells that it fired had a frangible plastic base. This feature ensured that on detonation, the gas that projected the shell forward was ejected through the venturi to the rear. In conventional artillery buffers and recuperators absorbed a shell's recoil energy. This made the gun very light. The 7.5-cm *Leichtgeschütz* 40. L/10 weighed 145 kg in action. It had a maximum range of 6,800 metres with a 5.83 kg





SIG 33 IN ACTION

ONE OF THE conclusions drawn from analysis of tactics on the WWI battlefield was the need for an infantry battalion to have its own integral artillery fire support. The manpower to handle these weapons was to come from within the battalion itself. This would enable the infantry battalion to supply some measure of its own fire support besides that usually provided by artillery batteries. There would also be an advantage in response.

The *schwere Infanteriegeschütz* or sIG 33 was not accepted for service, however, until 1936. In the early years of WWII few sIGs were used by mechanised divisions so they were usually horsedrawn.

Although designated as a gun, the weapon was actually deployed as an howitzer. After about 1943 it began to be replaced by a German copy of the Soviet 120-mm mortar which was much easier to handle.

Below: German artillery crew prepare a firing position for their sIG 33. Although hampered by excessive weight, in action the gun had sufficient range for most fire-support activities (4,700 metres), and its ordnance was powerful enough to deal with most strongpoints.



shell. The 7.5-cm *Ruckstossfreie Kanone* 43 fired a 4 kg shell up to 200 metres, but was normally used at 300 metres, and it weighed only 43.1 kg. It was issued in small numbers but was not popular with its users.

AIRBORNE GUNS

The 10.5-cm *Leichgeschütz* 40. L/13, introduced in 1943, was intended for paratroopers and could be broken down into four loads for delivery by container. On the ground it was towed by the half-track, the SdKfz 2 *kleines Kettenrad*. The gun

weighed 388 kg and fired a 14.8 kg HE shell to 7,950 metres. The performance of the 10.5-cm *Leichgeschütz* 42. L/17.5 and the 10.5-cm *Leichgeschütz* 43 were identical to the *Leichgeschütz* 40. L/13, but the former weighed 552 kg and the latter 523.7 kg. This increase in weight was the result of using steel rather than light alloys. The *Leichgeschütz* 43 was only produced in small numbers, but was a good infantry weapon since it could be broken down into 10 loads without the use of any tools other than the elevating and



Above: A Waffen SS crewed sIG 33 in action on the Eastern Front in winter conditions. The wheels of this gun have rubber tyres. This denotes that the weapon was towed by some form of mechanised tractor.

Below: Soviet soldiers prepare to disable a pair of captured 15-cm sIG 33 howitzers. The weight of these infantry support pieces meant that they were often left behind in the fluid fighting in the East.



traversing hand wheels.

The tactical drawback with all these weapons was the backblast. This meant that the crew had to position themselves to the side when it was firing. The dust that could be kicked up by the blast would also give away a gun's position.

STOVE-PIPE

The German infantry entered the war with a simple 7.92-mm anti-tank rifle, the *Panzerbüchse* 38 and 39. However, as the war developed, there was a need for more powerful and versatile

weapons. This led to the development of a wide range of rocket-powered projectiles. The 8.8-cm weapon, designated the *Raketenpanzerbüchse* 43 or 54/1, had the propaganda name of *Panzerschreck*, or Tank Terror, though it was known by the soldiers as the *Ofenrohr*, or Stove Pipe. The *Raketenpanzerbüchse* was a larger version of the American Rocket Launcher M1 (Bazooka). The Rp 43 weighed 9.2 kg and the Rp 54 10.5 kg. The compact Rp 54/1 weighed 9.45 kg. All weapons fired the Rp 4322 or



Above: A solitary soldier in a fox hole sets out his anti-tank weaponry. Alongside the Teller mine is a Gebalte Ladung, a makeshift adaptation of the standard stick grenade. When the central grenade exploded, it sympathetically detonated about 1.20 kg of explosives.

Left: 7.5-cm leichtes Gebirgsinfanteriegeschütz 36 in firing mode. It could be broken into eight loads. Though at 750 kg the gun was rather heavy, it was popular with mountain gunners for its stability in action and general ease of handling.

Below left: The Germans made extensive use of flamethrowers during the battle around Verdun in 1916. Here a Wehrmacht flamethrower team practices for the second round in 1939.

Rp 4992, a 3.3 kg hollow-charge, rocket-propelled projectile, out to a maximum range of 151 metres or 201 metres respectively. The 0.667 kg explosive warhead on these rockets could penetrate up to 21 cm of armour.

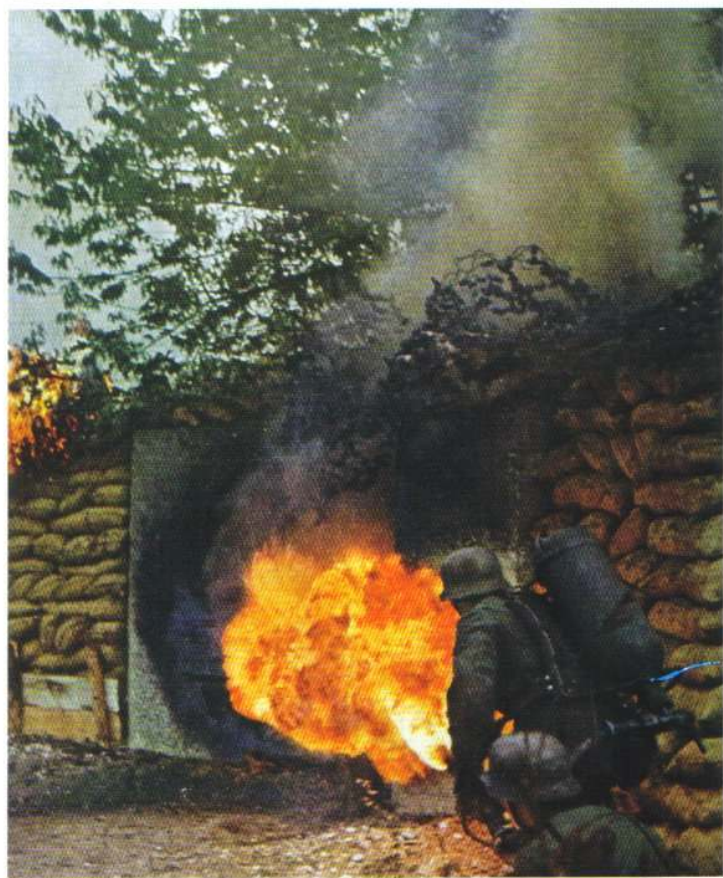
'TANK DEVIL'

A less sophisticated but widely used anti-tank weapon, the *Panzerfaust*, was a single-shot weapon that fired a rocket-propelled, hollow-charge bomb. It first appeared late in 1942 and by the end of 1943 was in widespread use. The *Panzerfaust 30 klein* had a range of only 30 metres, but its 680 gram charge could penetrate 140 mm of armour at 30°. When the charge weight was increased to 1.58 kg, and the bomb diameter to 15 cm the penetration went up to 200 mm at 30°. The range was increased to 60 metres and later 100 metres by the provision of larger warhead. By the end of the war work was underway to increase the range of the

Panzerfaust even further. But defeat came before the reusable *Panzerfaust 250* could get beyond the testing stage.

TANK HUNTING

Tank hunting could be undertaken with some very unusual weapons. These included the *Panzerwurfmine* (L). This consisted of a 1.35 kg grenade with a hollow-charge warhead, which contained a 50/50 mix of RDX and TNT. Four canvas fins deployed from the handle to ensure that the grenade hit its target correctly, so effectively deploying the shaped-charge warhead. It looked odd, and had a range of about 30 metres. It was effective enough however, and the Soviet Army copied it after the war. Despite its success the type was not copied closely by the other Allies. The Americans often misused them, thinking they were meant to be thrown in the same manner as an over-sized dart.





Goliath

THE GERMANS EXCELLED at invention, even if the end result of their creativity had limited practical value. The 'Goliath' was one of the more memorable designs. It was a remotely-controlled demolition device constructed by the German automotive manufacturer Burgward. The Goliath, operated by a specialist *Deutsche Fernlenk Truppe*, was produced in both petrol-engined and electrically-powered versions. The vehicles were employed in a variety of roles, including mine clearance and anti-tank operations. They were used successfully during the suppression of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. Some 7,500 units were produced.



Above, left and below (picture sequence): Stills from a training film for Goliath operators, demonstrate the anti-armour role of the demolition robot. Large numbers of Goliaths were produced towards the end of the war (above). Germany could no longer match the numberless masses of enemy armoured vehicles, and resorted to ever more desperate counter-measures. After unpacking (left), the units were received by the specialist troops who transported the weapon on a simple carriage, so conserving batteries or fuel.



Above: After unloading, the robot would then be camouflaged, and its crew would wait in ambush for a suitable opportunity. With target selected, the device would then be directed by remote control to within range, when it would then be detonated.



Left: Soviet armour rarely fell victim to the Goliath. Russian tactics from 1943 on, were to send infantry forward with their armour to neutralise German anti-tank squads. The robot was extremely vulnerable to small arms fire, and the remote cable telegraphed the position of the operators.



PANZERFAUST



THE 'PANZERFAUST' or Tank Devil was a revolutionary invention by Dr Langweiler of Hugo Schneider AG. It was the German's answer to the huge problem posed by the Soviet T-34. By 1943, over 200,000 were being produced per month.

Left: Desperate to halt the Allies, the Nazis set up the Volkssturm. Men previously considered unsuitable for frontline combat were armed with Panzerfausts and, with the minimum of training, were thrown into the battle.

Right: This volunteer demonstrates that the correct way to hold the weapon was under the arm to allow the propellant exhaust to vent safely to the rear. Aiming was problematic, being reliant on a flip-up leaf sight which had to be aligned with a pip on the projectile body.



Above: The Panzerschreck (tank terror) was a German copy of the American M1 bazooka. The small shield was used to protect the firer from the back-blast of the rocket motor. The effective range was about 150m, but it was essentially a close-in weapon and target tanks had to be 'stalked' for the crews to get within range. One hit was usually enough.

MAGNETIC MINES

The *Haft-Hohlladung* 3 kg was a magnetic mine with a TNT shaped-charge warhead. To operate it the soldier used the three powerful magnets on the outer edge of the cone to fix it to the side of a tank. He then pulled the friction-igniter which gave him between four and

seven seconds to escape. The Germans developed a special cement coating, or *Zimmeritt*, for their tanks that prevented captured magnetic weapons from being used against them.

If specialised anti-tank grenades were not available, there was always the standby of the *Gebalte Ladung*. This was an explosive charge constructed

from the heads of six stick grenade warheads which were wired around a central grenade.

BOILING FIRE

The Germans had pioneered the use of flame-throwers in World War I at Verdun, and used several types in World War II.

The *Flammenwerfer 35p* flame-thrower had a range of 25 to 30 metres and fuel for 10 seconds of use. It had a single trigger that operated the pressurised nitrogen tank which ignited the oil in the fuel container. The model was superseded by the *Flammenwerfer 40* and *41*, a cylindrical 'lifebuoy-type' flame-thrower. It had a similar range to the *Flammenwerfer 35*, but about half the fuel capacity. The *Flammenwerfer 41* was ignited by passing hydrogen over a heated element, that in turn set the oil fuel alight. Five blasts could be fired producing a flame of about 700° to 800° Centigrade. The *Flammenwerfer 42* dispensed with a gas tank that

often froze in Russian winters. It used 10 rimless 9-mm blank pistol cartridges for ignition. The fuel was sufficient for five to six blasts, each lasting three seconds with a range of 25 to 35 metres.

Towards the end of the war the *Einstossflammenwerfer 46* was introduced. It had originally been developed to a requirement from the Luftwaffe parachute arm. It was a single-shot disposable weapon, and provided a one-second burst about 38 metres long. It saw action in the fighting in Berlin in 1945.

'USER-FRIENDLY'

Like so many of the weapons designed and developed before and during World War II, those intended for infantry support were often innovative and 'user friendly'. However instead of concentrating on simplicity of design and volume production the major munitions manufacturers were permitted to expend time and effort on what could in some cases be described as novelty designs.



Left: The first type of Panzerfaust to enter widespread service was the Panzerfaust 30. The number referred to the 30m range. The short range of the early weapons was a great disadvantage to the firer, who had to get dangerously close to the target tank. Final versions boasted a range of 100m.

Below: The Panzerfaust exactly suited the German defensive tactics of 1943-45. Allied tank crews feared the weapon. It was available in huge numbers, and if aimed properly from the correct distance, every German could have at least one Allied tank to his credit.



THE EXCELLENCE OF Soviet tanks came as a nasty shock to the Germans in 1941. German anti-tank guns could not take out a Soviet tank at anything but point-blank range. A race began to develop a complimentary infantry anti-tank system. Bigger guns were quickly produced but these were bulky weapons needing large crews and a vehicle to tow them.

When the Panzerfaust first appeared in late 1942 it was unique. The manufacturer's design brief was to provide soldiers with a personal anti-tank weapon. What emerged was a recoilless gun that incorporated rocket principles. The weapon was meant to be cheap and simple. It was little more than a hollow tube that projected a hollow-charge grenade. The hollow-charge worked by means of the so-called Munroe effect. The warhead had a copper-lined, cone-shaped hollow interior with the open end facing forward. This ensured that when the head was detonated, the optimum distance from the armour plate, the explosive force went forward. A thin-focused jet of molten metal and superheated gas attacked the tank's armour plate at around 6000m per second. This jet melted a hole in the armour, and hot-gas and vapourised metal would either kill the tank crew outright or explode the ammunition.

Below: Set the Panzerfaust projectile could penetrate up to 200 mm of armour set at an angle of 30°. Any Allied tank was vulnerable. Tank crews therefore added extra protection to their vehicles, including piling sandbags around the hulls and welding on spare track.





NAZI DAGGERS



EDGED WEAPONS were omnipresent in the Third Reich. Knives, daggers, swords, hewers and bayonets were part of the dress uniform of virtually every organisation in the Nazi state, from the armed services to the Hitler Youth. Daggers were key items in the regalia of the SS and the SA, but they were also worn by organisations as diverse as the German Red Cross, the Diplomatic Service, the Forestry Service, the National Political Education Institute and Railway, Customs and Postal officials.

HONOUR SYMBOL

Daggers meant different things to different organisations. For the army, navy and air force, they were the symbol of the warrior, and were often worn in the place of dress swords. For the Stormtroopers of the SA, daggers were simply part of the uniform and were issued in huge numbers.

To the SS, however, daggers were especially significant. An SS-*Mann* was only entitled to wear his dagger after graduating from probationary SS-*Anwärter*. They were presented as part of the ceremony which took place only on 9 November, the anniversary of the Munich Putsch. Each SS member had to pay for his own dagger, and those dismissed from the organisation had to return the weapon to one of the three main Uniform centres at Munich, Berlin or Dresden.

Left: Members of the Nationalsozialistische Kraftfahr-Korps, the NSKK, look on as Adolf Hitler consecrates Deutschland Erwache banners at Nuremberg. Like the SS, the NSKK was originally part of the SA, which is why its uniform dagger is of the SA pattern.



Above: The original SS service dagger, or Dienstdolch, was introduced in 1933. In 1936 it was replaced by this version, suspended from nickel-silver chains – but only for officers and for those who had been members of the SS since before the seizure of power in 1933.

Left: Engraved daggers were used as presentation items to be treasured by the recipient – although this SA example, presented by Ernst Röhm to the senior SS men who would later connive in his murder, is a rare survival with its inscription intact.

NAZI SYMBOLS



Left: The workmanlike dagger worn by junior ranks in the German Red Cross, recognisable by its saw-tooth blade. The grips were of hard-wearing Bakelite.

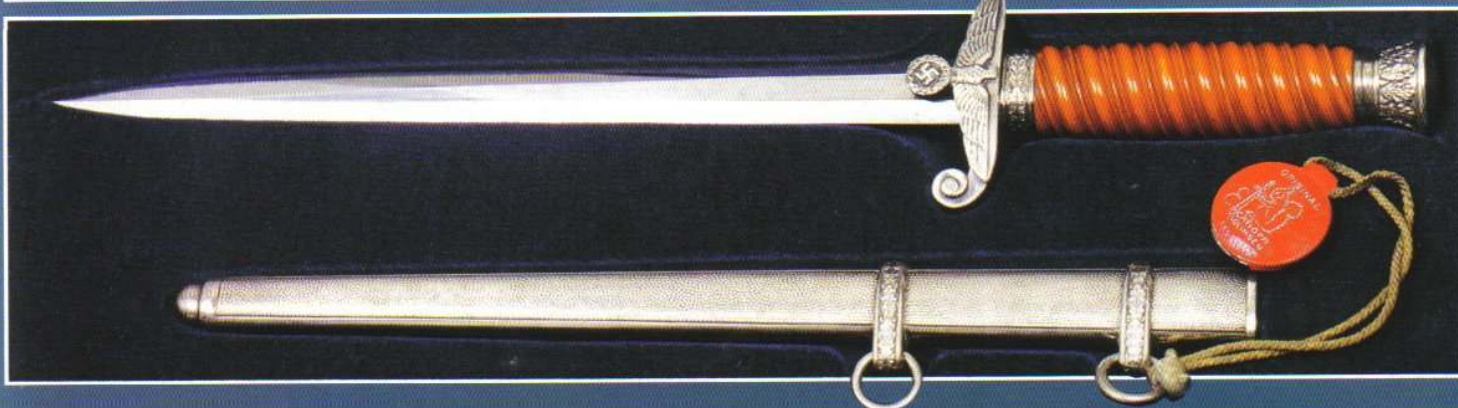
Below: An early 'second pattern' Luftwaffe dagger made by Alcoso. The celluloid grip varied in colour from the orange/brown seen here to pale yellow.



Above: Policemen did not carry a dagger, being issued a dress bayonet instead. This example, made by the Solingen firm of Alcoso, has a standard staghorn grip and nickel-plated fittings.

Right: The brass scabbard and hilt fittings of this naval officer's dagger are lavishly gilded, as are the scabbard suspension bands which attached the weapon to the uniform belt.





A Z

OF THE THIRD REICH

Totenvögel

Death, particularly death in battle, was a fundamentally important element in Nazi belief. Reflecting the Führer's personal creed, it was felt that anyone giving their life for the Reich was a martyr. The war dead were regarded as heroes of the National Socialist movement.

Totenvögel or 'Birds of Death' was the grim nickname for the Nazi Party functionaries tasked with informing the next of kin of the death of soldiers who had been killed in action. They were also responsible for organising

the ceremonies to honour the fallen heroes – ceremonies which had little to do with conventional religion.

The idea was to detach the Church from the funeral and grieving process, and for the Party to be seen as a family's only true support. In an added bitter twist, the term *Totenvögel* became associated with the *Reichsadler* or Reich Eagle, which featured extensively in Nazi heraldry.

Totenburgen or the 'Castles of the Dead' were huge turreted and

castellated memorials that Hitler planned but never built on the Atlantic coast of France and on the eastern borders of the Greater German Reich. In France they would be "an eternal monument to the liberation of the Continent from British influence", while in the East they would symbolise "the conquest by the Reich of the chaotic forces of the East."

Right: The Nazi party wanted to sever all relations with the church. As a result, the SS actively discouraged Christian involvement with memorials to the fallen.



Treblinka

Treblinka was Polish death camp, one of the *Aktion Reinhard* camps established in July 1942 by SS-*Brigadeführer* Odilo Globocnik, and commanded in succession by Irmfried Eberl, Franz Stangl and Kurt Franz.

Stangl had a mock railway station built with a clock, ticket office and flowers to sustain an illusion that this was genuinely a resettlement camp. The road from the undressing area to the gas chambers was known by camp staff as the *Himmelstrasse* or the 'Road to Heaven.' Some victims were unaware of their fate and were ushered quietly into the gas chambers, which were described as 'shower baths'. Others were simply beaten from the trains into the gas chambers.

The German staff of 40 was supplemented by 120 Ukrainians and between 700 and 1,000 Jews working as slave labourers. Known as *Hofjuden* or 'Court Jews', they worked as cabinet makers and jewellers. Others, known as *Goldjuden* or 'Gold

Jews' sorted and packed victims' clothing and their valuables.

In August 1943, aware that they would in turn be due for extermination the Jewish inmates revolted. The 700 workers killed 15 of their guards and set fire to buildings. Only 12 of 150 who escaped made a complete getaway, but they were enough to inform the Warsaw Ghetto that 'resettlement' actually meant extermination.

In November 1943, after as many as 850,000 Jews had been killed, the camp was closed down. All trace was removed and a peasant farmhouse was built from rubble recycled from the gas chambers.

Right: When the Warsaw Ghetto was cleared between August and October 1942, more than 250,000 Jews were sent to Treblinka. All but a handful were slaughtered in the camp's gas chambers.



See also The Holocaust

Issue 21: Aktion Reinhard

Trepper, Leopold (1904 – 1983)

Born in Neumarkt (Novy Tary), Trepper was one of the most successful of Moscow's spies. One of the founders of the Communist Party of Palestine before the British expelled him in the 1920s, he moved to France and the USSR, where he became a Colonel in the NKVD. He set up the *Rote Kapelle* (Red Orchestra) spy ring in Belgium in 1938. It grew to include 100 pro-Soviet

Germans, including Harro Schulze-Boysen and Arvid Harnack, nephew of the theologian Adolf von Harnack.

The network was discovered by the Abwehr late in 1942 and most of its members were arrested and hanged. Trepper convinced his captors that he would turn his coat. He escaped in 1943, eventually reaching Moscow – where he was again arrested. The

circumstances of his escape were considered so suspicious by the NKVD that he was imprisoned until 1954. From 1957 to 1967 he worked in Poland as a journalist until anti-Semitism drove him to Israel, where he settled in 1975. He died in Jerusalem.

Right: Leopold Trepper looked like the prosperous businessman he was. This deflected attention from his other role as a spymaster.



Tresckow, Henning von (1901 – 1944)

Born in Magdeburg on 10 January 1901, Henning von Tresckow was descended from a line of soldiers. He served as an officer in World War I, turning his energies to banking and his estate after the Armistice. He joined the Reichswehr and welcomed the Nazi seizure of power in 1933. However the excesses of the Röhm Purge and of *Kristallnacht* led to a growing disenchantment with the Nazis.

In 1939 and 1940 he served with distinction in Poland and France. The invasion of the Soviet Union convinced von Tresckow that Hitler was leading Germany to destruction – and that the only resolution would be to kill Hitler. On one occasion he persuaded the fire-eating Colonel von

Böselager to lead a Wehrmacht Field Security Regiment in an attack on Hitler and his SS bodyguards during a visit to Field Marshal von Kluge's HQ. The plan was vetoed by von Kluge.

Von Tresckow hoped to be posted to a position where he had access to the Führer's HQ at Rastenburg. Unfortunately, Field Marshal von Manstein's view that von Tresckow's attitude to National Socialism was suspect meant that he remained close to the front.

As chief of staff of Second Army, he encouraged Stauffenberg's attempt on Hitler's life. When he learned that the Führer had survived, he knew that he would be one of the first to be arrested. Fearing that he

would betray his friends under torture, he chose suicide. On a visit to the front near Bialystok, on July 21, 1944 he slipped away from his escort. Faking a firefight with pistol shots, von Tresckow killed himself with a hand grenade.

Right: Henning von Tresckow was the most persistent of all of Hitler's opponents. He tried unsuccessfully to entice senior Generals into his anti-Hitler conspiracy. He found more support from fellow colonels serving in the staff of von Kluge's Army Group Centre, on the Eastern Front in 1942 and 1943.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 20: Opposition to Hitler



Triumph des Willens

The 1934 Nuremberg Rally was the subject of a film by actress-turned-producer Leni Riefenstahl. In *Triumph des Willens* – 'Triumph of the Will' – she created one of the most powerful propaganda successes of the Nazi era. Although Goebbels respected her talent, he was not a fan of the director, since Riefenstahl was working directly for Hitler and not under the aegis of the Minister of Propaganda. Goebbels did all he could to sabotage the production, at least in part because she would not sleep with him. The film had its premier at Berlin's UFA-Palast cinema in 1936. It received a National State Prize, a gold medal at the Venice Film Festival and the Grand Prix of the French government at the Paris Film Festival.

To make the film, Riefenstahl had 30 cameramen with a large back up staff. She was involved in all the preparatory work for the rally, which allowed her to pre-position cameras in some

inaccessible locations. The one section of the film that does not work is a very pedestrian sequence of military vehicles and a mock battle – this was made by Army and Luftwaffe cameramen and added in later.

In a world before television the film brought home the faces and voices of the Nazi leadership to audiences throughout Europe and the USA, as well as creating a powerful impression of a disciplined and strong nation.

Riefenstahl went on to make a superb film about the 1936 Olympiad in Berlin, but in spite of her undoubted brilliance she was tainted by her close association with the Nazis. She had little opportunity to work in film after the war, turning with some success to still photography.

See also Secret Hitler Files
Issue 8: Hitler's Women
See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 2: Party Rallies



Above: Accompanied by Konstantin Hierl and Rudolf Hess, Hitler salutes the march past of the Reichsarbeitsdienst. The parade of the RAD was a key sequence in the film.

Right: Riefenstahl's masterwork heightened the almost religious devotion displayed by the German people for the Führer.



Troost, Paul, Ludwig (1878 – 1934)

Born in Wuppertal-Eberfeld on 17 August 1878, architect and designer Paul Troost was a tall man distinguished by his shaven head. He established his reputation before World War I, developing an austere style with a leaning towards classical forms. He was chosen to design the fittings for the luxury passenger liner *Europa*.

Hitler was an admirer, and in 1930 Troost was commissioned by the Führer to rebuild Munich's Barlo Palace as the NSDAP party

headquarters, a complex of buildings known as the *Braunes Haus* or Brown House.

Hitler took an enthusiastic interest in Troost's work and further commissions followed. They included the *Haus der Deutschen Kunst* (House of German Art) and two classical temples built in 1935 in Munich's Königsplatz as a memorial for the Nazis killed in the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. Troost also designed office buildings and the bridges for the *Autobahnen*.

Hitler stated that any artist who dared criticise Troost's work was to be declared ineligible for work on any public project. When Troost died in Munich on 21 January 1934, the responsibility for major designs was passed to Albert Speer.

Right: Hitler accompanies Paul Ludwig Troost and a mason at the foundation ceremony for the House of German Art in Munich. Troost was never to see the building completed, since he died soon after the ceremony.



Trott zu Solz, Adam von (1909 - 1944)

Born in Potsdam, Adam von Trott zu Solz came from a liberal, educated, cosmopolitan background. In 1929 he went to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. In 1933 he returned to Germany to study law. Hostile to the Nazis from the outset, he was a member of the Kreisau Circle. He wanted to see the overthrow of the Nazis, and Germany restored to Christian morality.

In 1935 he published a new edition of the works of the 19th Century poet Henrich von Kleist and in a commentary drew parallels between the Nazis and Napoleon. "Von Kleist," said von

Trott zu Solz, "had set his hopes on the sense of decency of the individual citizen."

In 1937 von Trott zu Solz went to China for a year as part of the final year of his Rhodes Scholarship. On the outbreak of war friends managed to find him a post in the German Foreign Office. In July 1939 he visited London, where he met Neville Chamberlain, and in October of that year he went to Washington as a member of the Institute of Pacific Relations. He hoped to build up contacts in the USA. In 1942 he travelled to Switzerland to meet the US agent Allen

Dulles. Further meetings took place with British and American contacts in Sweden in 1944.

Following the failure of the July Plot he was among hundreds of suspected Nazi opponents who were detained. He made no attempt to evade arrest and with the other plotters was tried in the Volksgericht, condemned to death and hanged on 26 August 1944.

Right: Adam von Trott zu Solz was typical of the idealistic aristocratic opposition to Hitler. Well-educated and devoutly Christian, he found a set of kindred spirits in the Kreisau Circle, which met on the estate of James von Moltke.



'U-boats'

The name given by Austrians to the 3,000 Jews who survived World War II in Vienna by going underground and hiding from the Nazis. After World War I the Jewish population of Austria had peaked at over 250,000, but by the time of the Anschluss in 1938 this had dropped to 185,000.

Over 125,000 emigrated before the outbreak of World War II, encouraged by the Jewish Emigration office run by Adolf Eichmann. This often involved being forced to pay bribes to

government officials. The bulk of the remaining Jewish population were deported in 1941 and 1942, most being slaughtered in the death camps. By November 1942 only 7,000 Jews remained in the entire country.

Right: Much of the Austrian population welcomed the German annexation in 1938. However Austrian Jews quickly realised that they had no future in the Greater German Reich. The majority emigrated, but a few tried to ride out the storm.



Udet, Ernst (1896 - 1941)

World War I fighter pilot, stunt flier, film actor and senior officer in the Luftwaffe, Ernst Udet was born in Frankfurt on Main on April 26, 1896. With 62 victories in the air he was second only to Baron Manfred von Richthofen in the list of German aces. In the 1920s he was a barn-storming pilot in the USA, and later flew in German adventure films starring Leni Riefenstahl.

With Erhard Milch he helped to set up plans for the secret Luftwaffe. When the Nazis came to power he became Inspector of Fighters. Udet was a passionate advocate of the dive-bomber, and

among his major contributions to the Luftwaffe were the development of the Junkers Ju 87 'Stuka' and the versatile Junkers Ju 88. He later became Director of Luftwaffe technical office.

Although he had a flair for design and a good grasp of the tactical role of fighters and bombers, he lacked the administrative skills needed for the post. He had also fallen out of favour with Hitler. When Rudolf Hess flew to Scotland on 10 May 1941, Udet assured the Führer that prevailing winds would force Hess off course and his aircraft would ditch in the sea.

The losses in the Battle of Britain as well as the strategic failure of the Luftwaffe preyed on his mind. The fighting in Russia was bogging down with no victory in sight when Milch temporarily overruled his plans to produce a new fighter aircraft, the Focke Wulf Fw 190. Milch also stopped jet research by Messerschmitt, and in a fit of depression on 17 November 1941, Udet shot himself.

Right: The extrovert Ernst Udet was a superb pilot with an adventurous spirit, but he was tragically miscast as head of the Luftwaffe's technical office.



Ulm-Kuhberg

An early *Schutzhaft* or 'Protective Custody' camp. The concept of protective custody, in which police could hold suspects for short periods without a warrant, dated back to Prussian days. Immediately the Nazis came to power the period of detention was increased to three months. The Reichstag Fire Decree gave

police the right to hold suspects indefinitely, and the prisoners had no rights of complaint.

Ulm-Kuhberg was one of more than 40 camps set up in 1933. It was established in the fortified enclosures of the former Upper Kuhberg fort in November of that year. The first inmates were 30 Communist political prisoners.

Prisoners from the Ulm Military garrison concentration camp, who had helped build the Kuhberg camp, became inmates themselves. Other political opponents sent to the camp included clergymen, journalists and trade unionists.

The camp was run by the Police and the SA, though it was

taken over by the SS after the Night of the Long Knives. Inmates worked in a Wehrmacht repair facility and in a local quarry. Accommodation was grim, prisoners being held in damp rooms within the fortress. In July 1935 the camp was dissolved and the 30 remaining detainees were moved to Dachau.

Unemployment - Arbeitslosigkeit

The unemployment that dogged the economic development of the Weimar Republic was a potent weapon for the Nazis. At the beginning of 1933, the number out of work stood at more than six million, or 19 percent of the workforce. The Nazis took credit for a series of 'make work' projects which brought totals

down rapidly, though most had in fact been started by the Weimar Government.

In January 1934, there were 3,700,000 out of work: in succeeding years this figure fell to 2,900,000 in January 1935, 2,500,000 in January 1936 and 1,800,000 in January 1937.

By the spring of 1937, with the

Nazi Four-Year Plan under way, there were less than one million unemployed.

The emergency work programmes or *Notsandarbeit* included reforestation, land reclamation, dam building and the construction of the autobahns. The Nazis claimed credit for putting the nation back

to work, although this had less to do with their economic policies than with a general upturn in the world economy which was under way in the mid-1930s.

The government statisticians massaged the figures to make the Nazis look better, and only listed as unemployed those workers considered 'politically reliable'.

Universum-Film-Aktiengesellschaft (UFA)

A German film company which was important in the early days of the cinema, but which became an arm of the Nazi propaganda ministry. Founded as a propaganda tool by the Imperial Army in December 1917, it was taken over by Deutsche Bank after the war. With works like *Das Kabinett des Dr Caligari* released in 1920 it established a reputation as an artistically important studio, but it was also commercially successful with films like *Madame Dubarry* (1919). However its attempt to challenge Hollywood in the 1920s was disastrous: films like Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) were artistically

stunning but financially crippling. Bankrupt, the studio was sold to Alfred Hugenberg in 1927.

In the 1930s, Ufa films became increasingly nationalistic. The Nazi policy of *Säuberung* - 'cleansing' - banished Jewish artists as 'alien in race and culture.' Much of this talent went to Hollywood.

In 1937 Dr Joseph Goebbels nationalised the German film industry, and all independent companies became part of Ufa-Film GmbH by 1938. During the war it continued to produce films, many with a strong historical or propaganda content, though romantic and humorous films

became more popular later in the war. The company was broken up by the Allies after World War II. In West Germany the Bertelsmann Publishing Group acquired surviving cinemas and production facilities in 1964.

Right: A poster for the UFA film 'GPU', starring Italian actress Laura Solari. A typical wartime propaganda piece mixing action with an anti-Soviet message, it features Solari as a woman who joins Moscow's dreaded secret police to find and kill the GPU men who slaughtered her family.

See also Inside the Third Reich
Issue 31: Arts & Entertainment



"Unsere Ehre Heist Treue"

"Our Honour is Loyalty" was the motto of the SS, reflecting the unquestioning obedience each new member swore to the Führer. It was carried on SS uniform belt buckles and on the blades of dress daggers.

The motto contrasted strongly with that on the belt buckles of the German army. "Gott mit uns" or "God with us" dated back to the reign of Emperor William II, but was not considered appropriate for the avowedly anti-religious *Schutzstaffel*.

The other ranks belt buckle was similar in design to the German

army buckle. It was detachable from the main load-carrying belt with an adjustable two-pin buckle and hook and loop backing on the four-sided aluminium plate at the front. The plate had a straight-winged *Reichsadler* eagle holding a runic square-standing wreathed swastika in its claws. The motto surrounded the swastika. In the field, officers of the *Waffen-SS* often used other ranks belts to carry ammunition pouches, water bottles, map cases and other equipment.

The officer's parade belt buckle was disk shaped, with the eagle

with downward curved wings holding a wreathed swastika. The motto on the scroll curved upwards to meet the tips of the eagle's wings.

Right: An SS dagger or *Dienstdolch*, its blade engraved with the individual version of the organisation's motto. The men who wore the *Totenkopf* placed immense importance on loyalty to the Führer, seeing themselves as the standard bearers of National Socialism. Their unquestioning obedience to orders meant that they were willing to commit horrific crimes in Hitler's name.



Untermensch

Sub-humans was the term used by Nazi propagandists to describe Jews and the non-Germanic races in Poland and Soviet Union. Although the idea of 'inferior' races being less than completely human had been around since the 18th Century, it became more widespread in racist propaganda during the 1920s, especially among the right-wing *völkisch* groups which formed the core of the Nazi Party.

It was adopted as the opposite to Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch* - the 'Over-man'

or 'Super-man for whom life was made meaningful by the application of power. Proposed in *Also sprach Zarathustra* (Thus Spake Zarathustra), Nietzsche's ideas had been adopted and twisted by the Nazis.

The idea that Jews and Slavs were not wholly human was a major part of the propaganda aimed at ordinary German soldiers, and the atrocities that were regular occurrences on the Eastern Front were the result.

But the rigid adherence to the racial doctrine was to cost the

Germans dear. It lost them the support of millions of individuals in places like the Ukraine who were strongly anti-Communist and could have helped the German Army as it fought on the Eastern Front. Instead they were turned into fierce foes.

Right: The smallpox-scarred face of a Siberian prisoner of war was used by the German propaganda machine in articles about the 'sub-humans' from the East.

See also Nazi Horrors
Issue 17: Occupation in the East



Unterseeboot - U Boot or U-boat

Submarines were among the few weapons that Germany possessed which could have driven the British out of the war. Drawing on his experiences in World War I, Admiral Karl Doenitz oversaw development of the U-boat arm in the 1930s, and when war broke out put his theories into practice. In spite of the relatively small numbers of boats deployed, the U-boat 'Wolf Packs' almost cut Britain's Atlantic lifeline in 1941 and 1942.

Unfortunately for the Kriegsmarine, by the time Doenitz could amass enough boats to strike a knockout blow, Allied countermeasures had improved decisively. Asdic, radar, long-

range aircraft and ULTRA code-breakers all combined to limit the life expectancy of the U-boat men. Advanced new boat designs came too late to make a difference.

Germany built more than 1100 boats during the war, over half of which were lost in action.

Right: Two of the first 'Type VII' boats which bore the brunt of Germany's submarine campaign, seen at Hamburg in 1937. U-30 survived to the end of the war, being scuttled in May 1945. U-31 was sunk by HMS Antelope in November 1940.

See also Hitler's War Machine

Issue 1: U-Boat Wolf Packs



Untersuchungs-und Schlichtungs-Ausschüsse

Also known as USCHLA, the 'Committee for Investigation and Settlement' was set up as a disciplinary body by Hitler in May 1926. The *Untersuchungs-und Schlichtungs-Ausschüsse* was intended to repair the Nazi Party, which had been weakened and nearly split by the rivalries between Hitler's followers and those who followed the Strasser brothers.

In part the weakness was Hitler's doing - he encouraged feuds among his followers on a 'divide and rule' principle.

USCHLA was not concerned with such matters as dishonest business practices, immorality, gambling or home difficulties, all of which were considered trivial. Its brief was to cover offences damaging the Party, particularly disobedience to Party orders, while the ultimate crime was disobedience or lack of respect for the Führer.

Expulsion from the NSDAP was the *Untersuchungs-und Schlichtungs-Ausschüsse's* harshest punishment, and after 1937 this also meant

consignment to a concentration camp and a virtual death sentence.

Right: Hitler plans his assault on the German electoral system. To do that, he needed a fully united party backing his decisions all the way, which meant that he had to control the socialist wing of the NSDAP headed by Gregor Strasser. USCHLA gave him the means of disciplining recalcitrant members of the Nazi Party.

See also Secret Hitler Files

Issue 24: The Wilderness Years



"Uprooted and Disinherited"

A phrase much used by Hitler in his early speeches. In one address delivered in October 1923, he made this idea a dominant theme. "The fate of Germany has slipped from the hands of the former ruling

classes into the hands of the uprooted and disinherited. Germans who have faith in the fatherland will go back to the battlefields; they will return to the place where the old German Reich was founded, and where it

was smashed by the slimy bandits who set their signatures to the Versailles Peace Treaty". The "uprooted and disinherited" would, according to Hitler "raise the new Germany from the bloody baptismal front".

This kind of talk found a ready audience among disaffected former soldiers and the unemployed, but such rhetoric was heard much less as the party became more powerful and Hitler courted the army and industry.

Ustase - Insurgent

The fascist independence movement in Croatia founded by Ante Pavelic on 7 January 1929. With financial support from Italy, the Croat movement demanded independence from Yugoslavia and conducted a campaign of terror. Its most notable victim was King Alexander I of Yugoslavia, assassinated in Marseilles in October 1934.

On 10 April 1941, following Germany's occupation of Yugoslavia, an 'Independent State of Croatia' was established. Pavelic became head of state, and following the fall of the war minister Slavko Kvaternik on 6 October 1942, he also became

head of the armed forces.

The Catholic Ustase was reborn as a savage anti-partisan force. Even the Germans were horrified by its excesses as it waged war against Orthodox Serbs, Jews, Muslims and Yugoslav Partisans. It set up concentration camps and carried out mass executions of whole villages. These pogroms aimed at producing an ethnically pure Croatia. It was to be achieved by either killing or expelling the country's two million Serbs to Serbia, or converting them to Roman Catholicism.

In 1945 surviving members of the Ustase captured by the British

were handed over to and executed by Tito's Partisans, a largely Serbian force. Pavelic evaded arrest and escaped to Argentina via Austria and Italy. In 1949 he set up an Ustase government in exile.

Right: Ante Pavelic was a lawyer who, in 1919, became a member of the violently anti-Serb Croatian Party of Justice. He set up Ustase after being exiled to Mussolini's Italy in 1929, and on achieving puppet-statehood he modelled the party on those of his Fascist masters.

See also Hitler's Battles

Issue 6: Hitler Strikes South



COMING IN THE NEXT VOLUMES OF **HITLER'S** Third Reich

SECRET HITLER FILES

Hitler's World View
Hitler and Stalin



THE HOLOCAUST

Judenrat: Jewish councils
Jewish resistance

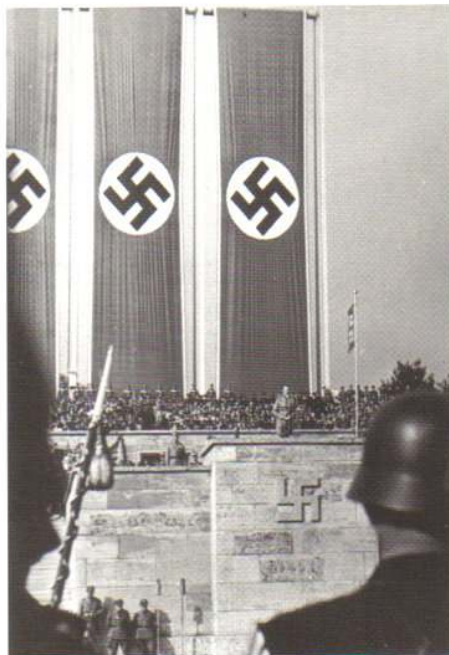


HITLER'S HENCHMEN

Erhard Milch
Ernst Kaltenbrunner

HITLER'S WAR MACHINE

Light Flak
Junkers Ju 52
Pzkw V Panther



INSIDE THE REICH

Corruption
Home Front
Nazis and the Church

NAZI HORRORS

Malmedy Massacres
Mauthausen
Neuengamme

NAZI SYMBOLS

The Swastika
Sicherheitsdienst



A-TO-Z OF THE THIRD REICH



IN THIS VOLUME OF **HITLER'S** **Third Reich**

SECRET HITLER FILES

Between 1925 and 1929 Hitler waited in the wings, with his core band of fervent devotees. Then the Wall Street Crash threw him on to centre-stage.

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH

Austria's Anschluss or union with Germany was a bloodless triumph which gave Adolf Hitler control of his homeland.



HITLER'S BATTLES

Winning the Battle of the Atlantic meant survival for Britain, safe reinforcement from the USA, and ultimate defeat for Germany. The decisive factor was air power.



HENCHMEN

Hitler's personal physician from 1933 to 1944, the talented and ambitious Professor Karl Brandt was entrusted with the Nazi Euthanasia programme. This sought to exterminate Germany's 'useless eaters.' He paid for his murderous work at Nuremberg.



WAR MACHINE

All infantry on the modern battlefield carry their own portable 'artillery'. The Wehrmacht in World War II carried a wider variety than any other army.

NAZI SYMBOLS

Edged weapons were omnipresent in the Third Reich. Knives and daggers were part of the dress uniform of virtually every Nazi organisation.

